Charles Sutton

AN ESSAY ON THE SLAVERY AND COMMERCE OF THE HUMAN SPECIES, PARTICULARLY THE AFRICAN.

TRANSLATED FROM A

LATIN DISSERTATION,

WHICH WAS HONOURED WITH

THE FIRST PRIZE

IN THE

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE,

FOR THE YEAR 1785,

WITH ADDITIONS.

By Thomas Clarkson.

Neque premendo alium me extuliſſe vellm.—LIVY.

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1874, April 28.
Bequest of
Hon. Chas. Sumner,
of Boston.
(H. U. 1830.)

TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE

WILLIAM CHARLES COLYEAR,

EARL OF PORTMORE,

VISCOUNT MILSINTOWN.

MY LORD,

THE dignity of the ſubject of this little Treatiſe, not any perſuaſion of its merits as a literary compoſition, encourages me to offer it to your Lordſhip's patronage. The cauſe of freedom has always been found ſufficient, in every age and country, to attract the notice of the generous and humane; and it is therefore, in a more peculiar manner, worthy of the attention and favour of a perſonage, who holds a diſtinguiſhed rank in that illuſtrious iſland, the very air of which has been determined, upon a late inveſtigation of its laws, to be an antidote

againſt ſlavery. I feel a ſatisfaction in the opportunity, which the publication of this treatiſe affords me, of acknowledging your Lordſhip's civilities, which can only be equalled by the reſpect, with which I am,

Your Lordſhip's

much obliged,

and obedient ſervant,

THOMAS CLARKSON.

PRE-

PREFACE

As the ſubject of the following work has fortunately become of late a topic of converſation, I cannot begin the preface in a manner more ſatisfactory to the feelings of the benevolent reader, than by giving an account of thoſe humane and worthy perſons, who have endeavoured to draw upon it that ſhare of the public attention which it has obtained.

Among the well diſpoſed individuals, of different nations and ages, who have humanely exerted themſelves to ſuppreſs the abject perſonal ſlavery, introduced in the original cultivation of the *European* colonies in the weſtern world, *Bartholomew de las Caſas*, the pious biſhop of *Chiapa*, in the fifteenth century, ſeems to have been the firſt. This amiable man, during his reſidence in *Spaniſh America*, was ſo ſenſibly affected at the treatment which the miſerable Indians underwent, that he returned to *Spain*, to make a public remonſtrance before the celebrated emperor *Charles* the

the fifth, declaring, that heaven would one day call him to an account for thoſe cruelties, which he then had it in his power to prevent. The ſpeech which he made on the occaſion, is now extant, and is a moſt perfect picture of benevolence and piety.

But his intreaties, by the oppoſition of avarice, were rendered ineffectual: and I do not find by any books which I have read upon the ſubject, that any other perſon interfered till the laſt century, when *Morgan Godwyn*, a *Britiſh* clergyman, diſtinguiſhed himſelf in the cauſe.

The preſent age has alſo produced ſome zealous and able oppoſers of the *colonial* ſlavery. For about the middle of the preſent century, *John Woolman* and *Anthony Benezet*, two reſpectable members of the religious ſociety called Quakers, devoted much of their time to the ſubject. The former travelled through moſt parts of *North America* on foot, to hold converſations with the members of his own ſect, on the impiety of retaining thoſe in a ſtate of involuntary ſervitude, who had never given them offence. The latter kept a free

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ſchool at *Philadelphia*, for the education of black people. He took every opportunity of pleading in their behalf. He publiſhed ſeveral treatiſes againſt ſlavery,* and gave an hearty proof of his attachment to the cauſe, by leaving the whole of his fortune in ſupport of that ſchool, to which he had ſo generouſly devoted his time and attention when alive.

Till this time it does not appear, that any bodies of men had collectively intereſted themſelves in endeavouring to remedy the evil. But in the year 1754, the religious ſociety, called Quakers, publicly teſtified their ſentiments upon the ſubject,‡ declaring, that "to live in eaſe and plenty by the toil of thoſe, "whom fraud and violence had put into their "power, was neither conſiſtent with Chriſti-"anity nor common juſtice."

Impreſſed with theſe ſentiments, many of this ſociety immediately liberated their ſlaves;

* A Deſcription of Guinea, with an Inquiry into the Riſe and Progreſs of the Slave Trade, &c.——A Caution to Great Britain and her Colonies, in a ſhort Repreſentation of the calamitous State of the enſlaved Negroes in the Britiſh Dominions. Beſides ſeveral ſmaller pieces.

‡ They had cenſured the *African Trade* in the year 1727, but had taken no public notice of the *colonial* ſlavery till this time.

and

and though ſuch a meaſure appeared to be attended with conſiderable loſs to the benevolent individuals, who unconditionally preſented them with their freedom, yet they adopted it with pleaſure; nobly conſidering, that to poſſeſs a little, in an honourable way, was better than to poſſeſs much, through the medium of injuſtice. Their example was gradually followed by the reſt. A general emancipation of the ſlaves in the poſſeſſion of Quakers, at length took place; and ſo effectually did they ſerve the cauſe which they had undertaken, that they denied the claim of membership in their religious community, to all ſuch as ſhould hereafter oppoſe the ſuggeſtions of juſtice in this particular, either by retaining ſlaves in their poſſeſſion, or by being in any manner concerned in the ſlave trade: and it is a fact, that through the vaſt tract of North America, there is not at this day a ſingle ſlave in the poſſeſſion of an acknowledged Quaker.

But though this meaſure appeared, as has been obſerved before, to be attended with conſiderable loſs to the benevolent individuals who adopted it, yet, as virtue ſeldom fails of obtaining its reward, it became ultimately beneficial.

neficial. Moſt of the ſlaves, who were thus unconditionally freed, returned without any ſolicitation to their former maſters, to ſerve them, at ſtated wages, as freemen. The work, which they now did, was found to be better done than before. It was found alſo, that a greater quantity was done in the ſame time. Hence leſs than the former number of labourers was ſufficient. From theſe, and a variety of other circumſtances, it appeared, that their plantations were conſiderably more profitable, when worked by freemen, than when worked, as before, by ſlaves; and that they derived therefore, contrary to their expectations, a conſiderable advantage from their benevolence.

Animated by the example of the Quakers, the members of other ſects began to deliberate about adopting the ſame meaſure. Some of thoſe of the church of England, of the Roman Catholics, and of the Preſbyterians and Independants, freed their ſlaves; and there happened but one inſtance, where the matter was debated, where it was not immediately put in force. This was in *Pennſylvania*. It was agitated in the ſynod of the Preſbyterians there, to oblige their members to liberate their ſlaves.

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The queſtion was negatived by a majority of but one perſon; and this oppoſition ſeemed to ariſe rather from a diſlike to the attempt of forcing ſuch a meaſure upon the members of that community, than from any other conſideration. I have the pleaſure of being credibly informed, that the manumiſſion of ſlaves, or the employment of freemen in the plantations, is now daily gaining ground in North America. Should ſlavery be aboliſhed there, (and it is an event, which, from theſe circumſtances, we may reaſonably expect to be produced in time) let it be remembered, that the Quakers will have had the merit of its abolition.

Nor have their brethren here been leſs aſſiduous in the cauſe. As there are happily no ſlaves in this country, ſo they have not had the ſame opportunity of ſhewing their benevolence by a general emancipation. They have not however omitted to ſhew it as far as they have been able. At their religious meetings they have regularly inquired if any of their members are concerned in the iniquitous *African* trade. They have appointed a committee for obtaining every kind of information

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on the ſubject, with a view to its ſuppreſſion, and, about three or four years ago, petitioned parliament on the occaſion for their interference and ſupport. I am ſorry to add, that their benevolent application was ineffectual, and that the reformation of an evil, productive of conſequences equally impolitic and immoral, and generally acknowledged to have long diſgraced our national character, is yet left to the unſupported efforts of piety, morality and juſtice, againſt intereſt, violence and oppreſſion; and theſe, I bluſh to acknowledge, too ſtrongly countenanced by the legiſlative authority of a country, the baſis of whoſe government is *liberty*.

Nothing can be more clearly ſhewn, than that an inexhauſtible mine of wealth is neglected in *Africa*, for the proſecution of this impious traffic; that, if proper meaſures were taken, the revenue of this country might be greatly improved, its naval ſtrength increaſed, its colonies in a more flouriſhing ſituation, the planters richer, and a trade, which is now a ſcene of blood and deſolation,

converted

converted into one, which might be profecuted with *advantage* and *honour*.

Such have been the exertions of the Quakers in the cauſe of humanity and virtue. They are ſtill profecuting, as far as they are able, their benevolent deſign; and I ſhould ſtop here and praiſe them for thus continuing their humane endeavours, but that I conceive it to be unneceſſary. They are acting conſiſtently with the principles of religion. They will find a reward in their own conſciences; and they will receive more real pleaſure from a ſingle reflection on their conduct, than they can poſſibly experience from the praiſes of an hoſt of writers.

In giving this ſhort account of thoſe humane and worthy perſons, who have endeavoured to reſtore to their fellow creatures the rights of nature, of which they had been unjuſtly deprived, I ſhould feel myſelf unjuſt were I to omit two zealous oppoſers of the *colonial* tyranny, conſpicuous at the preſent day.

The firſt is Mr. *Granville Sharpe*. This Gentleman has particularly diſtinguiſhed himſelf in the cauſe of freedom. It is a notorious

fact,

fact, that, but a few years ſince, many of the unfortunate black people, who had been brought from the colonies into this country, were ſold in the metropolis to merchants and others, when their maſters had no farther occaſion for their ſervices; though it was always underſtood that every perſon was free, as ſoon as he landed on the Britiſh ſhore. In conſequence of this notion, theſe unfortunate black people, refuſed to go to the new maſters, to whom they were conſigned. They were however ſeized, and forcibly conveyed, under cover of the night, to ſhips then lying in the *Thames*, to be retranſported to the colonies, and to be delivered again to the planters as merchantable goods. The humane Mr. *Sharpe*, was the means of putting a ſtop to this iniquitous traffic. Whenever he gained information of people in ſuch a ſituation, he cauſed them to be brought on ſhore. At a conſiderable expence he undertook their cauſe, and was inſtrumental in obtaining the famous decree in the caſe of *Somerſett*, that as ſoon as any perſon whatever ſet his foot in this country, he came

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under the protection of the *British* laws, and was conſequently free. Nor did he interfere leſs honourably in that cruel and diſgraceful caſe, in the ſummer of the year 1781, when *an hundred and thirty two* negroes, in their paſſage to the colonies, were thrown into the ſea alive, to defraud the underwriters; but his pious endeavours were by no means attended with the ſame ſucceſs. To enumerate his many laudable endeavours in the extirpation of tyranny and oppreſſion, would be to ſwell the preface into a volume: ſuffice it to ſay, that he has written ſeveral books on the ſubject, and one particularly, which he diſtinguiſhes by the title of "*A Limitation of* "*Slavery.*"

The ſecond is the *Rev. James Ramſay.* This gentleman reſided for many years in the *Weſt-Indies*, in the clerical office. He peruſed all the colonial codes of law, with a view to find if there were any favourable clauſes, by which the grievances of ſlaves could be redreſſed; but he was ſeverely diſappointed in his purſuits. He publiſhed a treatiſe, ſince his return to England, called *An Eſſay on the Treat-*

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ment and Converſion of African Slaves in the Britiſh Sugar Colonies, which I recommend to the peruſal of the humane reader. This work reflects great praiſe upon the author, ſince, in order to be of ſervice to this ſingularly oppreſſed part of the human ſpecies, he compiled it at the expence of forfeiting that friendſhip, which he had contracted with many in thoſe parts, during a ſeries of years, and at the hazard, as I am credibly informed, of ſuffering much in his private property, as well as of ſubjecting himſelf to the ill-will and perſecution of numerous individuals.

This Eſſay *on the Treatment and Converſion of African Slaves*, contains ſo many important truths on the colonial ſlavery, and has come ſo home to the planters, (being written by a perſon who has a thorough knowledge of the ſubject) as to have occaſioned a conſiderable alarm. Within the laſt eight months, two publications have expreſsly appeared againſt it. One of them is intitled "*Curſory Remarks* on "Mr. Ramſay's Eſſay;" the other an "*Apology for Negroe Slavery*." On each of theſe I am bound, as writing on the ſubject, to make a few remarks.

The

The *curſory remarker* inſinuates, that Mr. Ramſay's account of the treatment is greatly exaggerated, if not wholly falſe. To this I ſhall make the following reply. I have the honour of knowing ſeveral diſintereſted gentlemen, who have been acquainted with the Weſt Indian iſlands for years. I call them diſintereſted, becauſe they have neither had a concern in the *African* trade, nor in the *colonial* ſlavery: and I have heard theſe unanimouſly aſſert, that Mr. *Ramſay*'s account is ſo far from being exaggerated, or taken from the moſt dreary pictures that he could find, that it is abſolutely below the truth; that he muſt have omitted many inſtances of cruelty, which he had ſeen himſelf; and that they only wondered, how he could have written with ſo much moderation upon the ſubject. They allow the *Curſory Remarks* to be excellent as a compoſition, but declare that it is perfectly devoid of truth.

But the *curſory remarker* does not depend ſo much on the circumſtances which he has advanced, (nor can he, ſince they have no other exiſtence

exiſtence than in his own brain) as on the inſtrument *detraction*. This he has uſed with the utmoſt virulence through the whole of his publication, artfully ſuppoſing, that if he could bring Mr. *Ramſay*'s reputation into diſpute, his work would fall of courſe, as of no authenticity. I ſubmit this ſimple queſtion to the reader. When a writer, in attempting to ſilence a publication, attacks the character of its author, rather than the principles of the work itſelf, is it not a proof that the work itſelf is unqueſtionable, and that this writer is at a loſs to find an argument againſt it?

But there is ſomething ſo very ungenerous in this mode of replication, as to require farther notice. For if this is the mode to be adopted in literary diſputes, what writer can be ſafe? Or who is there, that will not be deterred from taking up his pen in the cauſe of virtue? There are circumſtances in every perſon's life, which, if given to the public in a malevolent manner, and without explanation, might eſſentially injure him in the eyes of the world; though, were they explained, they

would be even reputable. The *curſory remarker* has adopted this method of diſpute; but Mr. *Ramſay* has explained himſelf to the ſatisfaction of all parties, and has refuted him in every point. The name of this *curſory remarker* is *Tobin:* a name which I feel myſelf obliged to hand down with deteſtation, as far as I am able; and with an hint to future writers, that they will do themſelves more credit, and ſerve more effectually the cauſe which they undertake, if on ſuch occaſions they attack the work, rather than the character of the writer, who affords them a ſubject for their lucubrations.

Nor is this the only circumſtance which induces me to take ſuch particular notice of the *Curſory Remarks.* I feel it incumbent upon me to reſcue an injured perſon from the cruel aſperſions that have been thrown upon him, as I have been repeatedly informed by thoſe who have the pleaſure of his acquaintance, that his character is irreproachable. I am alſo intereſted myſelf. For if ſuch detraction is paſſed over in ſilence, my own reputation, and not my work, may be attack-

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ed by an anonymous hireling in the cauſe of ſlavery.

The *Apology for Negroe Slavery* is almoſt too deſpicable a compoſition to merit a reply. I have only therefore to obſerve, (as is frequently the caſe in a bad cauſe, or where writers do not confine themſelves to truth) that the work refutes itſelf. This writer, ſpeaking of the ſlave trade, aſſerts, that people are never kidnapped on the coaſt of *Africa*. In ſpeaking of the treatment of ſlaves, he aſſerts again, that it is of the very mildeſt nature, and that they live in the moſt comfortable and happy manner imaginable. To prove each of his aſſertions, he propoſes the following regulations. That the *ſtealing* of ſlaves from *Africa* ſhould be felony. That the *premeditated murder* of a ſlave by any perſon on board, ſhould come under the ſame denomination. That when ſlaves arrive in the colonies, lands ſhould be allotted for their proviſions, *in proportion to their number*, or commiſſioners ſhould ſee that a *ſufficient* quantity of *ſound wholeſome* proviſions is purchaſed. That they ſhould not work on *Sundays* and *other*

holy-days. That extra labour, or *night-work, out of crop*, ſhould be prohibited. That a *limited number* of ſtripes ſhould be inflicted upon them. That they ſhould have *annually* a ſuit of clothes. That old infirm ſlaves ſhould be *properly cared for*, &c.—Now it can hardly be conceived, that if this author had tried to injure his cauſe, or contradict himſelf, he could not have done it in a more effectual manner, than by this propoſal of theſe ſalutary regulations. For to ſay that ſlaves are honourably obtained on the coaſt; to ſay that their treatment is of the mildeſt nature, and yet to propoſe the above-mentioned regulations as neceſſary, is to refute himſelf more clearly than I confeſs myſelf to be able to do it: and I have only to requeſt, that the regulations propoſed by this writer, in the defence of ſlavery, may be conſidered as ſo many proofs of the aſſertions contained in my own work.

I ſhall cloſe my account with an obſervation, which is of great importance in the preſent caſe. Of all the publications in favour of the ſlave-trade, or the ſubſequent ſlavery in the colonies, there is not one which has

not been written, either by a chaplain to the African factories, or by a merchant, or by a planter, or by a perſon whoſe intereſt has been connected in the cauſe which he has taken upon him to defend. Of this deſcription are Mr. *Tobin*, and the *Apologiſt for Negroe Slavery*. While on the other hand thoſe who have had as competent a knowledge of the ſubject, but not the *ſame intereſt* as themſelves, have unanimouſly condemned it; and many of them have written their ſentiments upon it, at the hazard of creating an innumerable hoſt of enemies, and of being ſubjected to the moſt malignant oppoſition.—Now, which of theſe are we to believe on the occaſion? Are we to believe thoſe who are parties concerned, who are intereſted in the practice?—But the queſtion does not admit of a diſpute.

Concerning my own work, it ſeems proper to obſerve, that when the original Latin Diſſertation, as the title page expreſſes, was honoured by the Univerſity of Cambridge with the firſt of their annual prizes for the year 1785, I was waited upon by ſome gentlemen

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of reſpectability and conſequence, who requeſted me to publiſh it in Engliſh. The only objection which occurred to me was this; that having been prevented, by an attention to other ſtudies, from obtaining that critical knowledge of my own language, which was neceſſary for an Engliſh compoſition, I was fearful of appearing before the public eye: but that, as they flattered me with the hope, that the publication of it might be of uſe, I would certainly engage to publiſh it, if they would allow me to poſtpone it for a little time, till I was more in the habit of writing. They replied, that as the public attention was now excited to the caſe of the unfortunate *Africans*, it would be ſerving the cauſe with double the effect, if it were to be publiſhed within a few months. This argument prevailed. Nothing but this circumſtance could have induced me to offer an Engliſh compoſition to the inſpection of an hoſt of critics: and I truſt therefore that this circumſtance will plead much with the benevolent reader, in favour of thoſe faults which he may find in the preſent work.

Having

Having thus promiſed to publiſh it, I was for ſome time doubtful from which of the copies to tranſlate. There were two, the original and an abridgement. The latter (as theſe academical compoſitions are generally of a certain length) was that which was ſent down to Cambridge, and honoured with the prize. I was determined however, upon conſulting with my friends, to tranſlate from the former. This has been faithfully done with but few * additions. The reader will probably perceive the Latin idiom in ſeveral paſſages of the work, though I have endeavoured, as far as I have been able, to avoid it. And I am ſo ſenſible of the diſadvantages under which it muſt yet lie, as a tranſlation, that I wiſh I had written upon the ſubject, without any reference at all to the original copy.

It will perhaps be aſked, from what authority I have collected thoſe facts, which relate

* The inſtance of the *Dutch* coloniſts at the Cape, in the firſt part of the Eſſay; the deſcription of an African battle, in the ſecond; and the poetry of a negroe girl in the third, are the only conſiderable additions that have been made.

to the colonial ſlavery. I reply, that I have had the means of the very beſt of information on the ſubject; having the pleaſure of being acquainted with many, both in the naval and military departments, as well as with ſeveral others, who have been long acquainted with *America* and the *Weſt-Indian* iſlands. The facts therefore which I have related, are compiled from the diſintereſted accounts of theſe gentlemen, all of whom, I have the happineſs to ſay, have coincided, in the minuteſt manner, in their deſcriptions. It muſt be remarked too, that they were compiled, not from what theſe gentlemen heard, while they were reſident in thoſe parts, but from what they actually *ſaw*. Nor has a ſingle inſtance been taken from any book whatever upon the ſubject, except that which is mentioned in the 235th page; and this book was publiſhed in *France*, in the year 1777, by *authority*.

I have now the pleaſure to ſay, that the accounts of theſe diſintereſted gentlemen, whom I conſulted on the occaſion, are confirmed by all the books which I have ever peruſed upon ſlavery, except thoſe which have been

been written by *merchants*, *planters*, &c.— They are confirmed by Sir *Hans Sloan's* Voyage to Barbadoes; *Griffith Hughes's* Hiſtory of the ſame iſland, printed 1750; an Account of North America, by *Thomas Jeffries*, 1761; all *Benezet's* works, *&c. &c.* and particularly by Mr. *Ramſay's* Eſſay on the Treatment and Converſion of the African Slaves in the Britiſh Sugar Colonies; a work which is now firmly eſtabliſhed; and, I may add, in a very extraordinary manner, in conſequence of the controverſy which this gentleman had ſuſtained with the *Curſory Remarker*, by which ſeveral facts which were mentioned in the original copy of my own work, before the controverſy began, and which had never appeared in any work upon the ſubject, have been brought to light. Nor has it received leſs ſupport from a letter, publiſhed only laſt week, from Capt. J. S. Smith, of the Royal Navy, to the Rev. Mr. Hill; on the former of whom too high encomiums cannot be beſtowed, for ſtanding forth in that noble and diſintereſted manner, in behalf of an injured character.

I have

I have now only to ſolicit the reader again, that he will make a favourable allowance for the preſent work, not only from thoſe circumſtances which I have mentioned, but from the conſideration, that only two months are allowed by the Univerſity for theſe their annual compoſitions. Should he however be unpropitious to my requeſt, I muſt conſole myſelf with the reflection, (a reflection that will always afford me pleaſure, even amidſt the cenſures of the great,) that by undertaking the cauſe of the unfortunate *Africans*, I have undertaken, as far as my abilities would permit, the cauſe of injured innocence.

London, June 1ſt, 1786.

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AN

AN

ESSAY

ON THE

SLAVERY AND COMMERCE

OF THE

HUMAN SPECIES.

IN THREE PARTS.

PART I.

THE HISTORY OF SLAVERY.

CHAP. I.

WHEN civilized, as well as barbarous nations, have been found, through a long ſucceſſion of ages, uniformly to concur in the ſame cuſtoms, there ſeems to ariſe a preſumption, that ſuch cuſtoms are not only eminently uſeful, but are founded alſo on the principles

of juſtice. Such is the caſe with reſpect to *Slavery:* it has had the concurrence of all the nations which hiſtory has recorded, and the repeated practice of ages from the remoteſt antiquity, in its favour. Here then is an argument, deduced from the general conſent and agreement of mankind, in favour of the propoſed ſubject: but alas! when we reflect that the people, thus reduced to a ſtate of ſervitude, have had the ſame feelings with ourſelves; when we reflect that they have had the ſame propenſities to pleaſure, and the ſame averſions from pain, another argument ſeems immediately to ariſe in oppoſition to the former, deduced from our own feelings, and that divine ſympathy which nature has implanted in our breaſts, for the moſt uſeful and generous of purpoſes. To aſcertain the truth therefore, where two ſuch oppoſite ſources of argument occur; where the force of cuſtom pleads ſtrongly on the one hand, and the feelings of humanity on the other, is a matter of much importance, as the dignity of human nature is concerned, and the rights and liberties of mankind will be involved in its diſcuſſion.

It

It will be neceſſary, before this point can be determined, to conſult the Hiſtory of Slavery, and to lay before the reader, in as conciſe a manner as poſſible, a general view of it from its earlieſt appearance to the preſent day.

The firſt whom we ſhall mention here to have been reduced to a ſtate of ſervitude may be comprehended in that claſs, which is uſually denominated the *Mercenary*. It conſiſted of free-born citizens, who, from the various contingencies of fortune, had become ſo poor as to have recourſe for their ſupport to the ſervice of the rich. Of this kind were thoſe, both among the Egyptians and the Jews, who are recorded in the * ſacred writings. † The Grecian *Thetes* alſo were of this deſcription, as well as thoſe among the Romans, from whom

* Geneſis, Ch. 47. Leviticus xxv. v. 39, 40.

† The *Thetes* appear very early in the Grecian Hiſtory.

——————— ϗ τίνες αὐτῶ

Κῦροι ἕποντ' Ιθάκης ἐξαίρετοι ; ἢ ἑοὶ αὐτῦ

Θῆτες τε Δμῶες τε ; Od. Hom. Δ. 642. They were afterwards ſo much in uſe, that " Μυρίοι δήπυ ἀπεδίδοντο ἑαυτυς, ὥστε " δυλευέιν κατὰ συγγραφην," till Solon ſuppreſſed the cuſtom in Athens.

the claſs receives its appellation, the || *Mercenarii.*

We may obſerve of the above-mentioned, that their ſituation was in many inſtances ſimilar to that of our own ſervants. There was an expreſs contract between the parties: they could, moſt of them, demand their diſcharge, if they were ill uſed by their reſpective maſters; and they were treated therefore with more humanity than thoſe, whom we uſually diſtinguiſh in our language by the appellation of *Slaves.*

As this claſs of ſervants was compoſed of men, who had been reduced to ſuch a ſituation by the contingencies of fortune, and not by their own miſconduct, ſo there was another among the ancients, compoſed entirely of thoſe who had ſuffered the loſs of liberty from their

|| The mention of theſe is frequent among the claſſics; they were called in general *mercenarii*, from the circumſtances of their *hire*, as "quibus, non malè præcipiunt, qui ita jubent uti, ut "*mercenariis*, operam exigendam, juſta præbenda. Cicero de "off." But they are ſometimes mentioned in the law books by the name of *liberi*, from the circumſtances of their *birth*, to diſtinguiſh them from the *alieni*, or foreigners, as Juſtinian. D. 7. 8. 4.—Id. 21. 1. 25. &c. &c. &c.

own imprudence. To this claſs may be reduced the Grecian *Prodigals*, who were detained in the ſervice of their creditors till the fruits of their labour were equivalent to their debts; the *delinquents* who were ſentenced to the oar; and the German *enthuſiaſts*, as mentioned by Tacitus, who were ſo immoderately charmed with gaming, as, when every thing elſe was gone, to have ſtaked their liberty and their very ſelves. "The loſer," ſays he, "goes into a voluntary ſervitude, and though "younger and ſtronger than the perſon with "whom he played, patiently ſuffers himſelf "to be bound and ſold. Their perſeverance "in ſo bad a cuſtom is ſtiled honour. The "ſlaves, thus obtained, are immediately ex-"changed away in commerce, that the win-"ner may get rid of the ſcandal of his vic-"tory."

To enumerate other inſtances would be unneceſſary: it will be ſufficient to obſerve, that the ſervants of this claſs were in a far more wretched ſituation than thoſe of the former; their drudgery was more intenſe; their treatment more ſevere; and there was no retreat

at

at pleaſure, from the frowns and laſhes of their deſpotic maſters.

Having premiſed this, we may now proceed to a general diviſion of ſlavery into *voluntary* and *involuntary*. The *voluntary* will comprehend the two claſſes which we have already mentioned; for, in the firſt inſtance, there was a *contract* founded on *conſent*; and, in the ſecond, there was a *choice* of engaging or not in thoſe practices, the known conſequences of which were ſervitude. The *involuntary*, on the other hand, will comprehend thoſe who were forced without any ſuch *condition* or *choice* into a ſituation, which as it tended to degrade a part of the human ſpecies, and to claſs it with the brutal, muſt have been, of all human ſituations, the moſt wretched and inſupportable. Theſe are they whom we ſhall conſider ſolely in the preſent work. We ſhall therefore take our leave of the former, as they were mentioned only that we might ſtate the queſtion with greater accuracy, and be the better enabled to reduce it to its proper limits.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

THE firſt that will be mentioned of the *involuntary*, were *priſoners of war*.* "It was "a law eſtabliſhed from time immemorial "among the nations of antiquity, to oblige "thoſe to undergo the ſeverities of ſervitude, "whom victory had thrown into their hands." Conformably with this, we find all the Eaſtern nations unanimous in the practice. The ſame cuſtom prevailed among the people of the Weſt; for as the Helots became the ſlaves of the Spartans, from the right of conqueſt only, ſo priſoners of war were reduced to the ſame ſituation by the reſt of the inhabitants of Greece. By the ſame principles that actuated theſe were the Romans alſo influenced. Their Hiſtory will confirm the fact: for how many cities are recorded to have been taken; how many armies to have been vanquiſhed in the field, and the wretched ſurvivors, in both

* "Νόμος ἐν πᾶσιν Ἀνθρώποις ἀῤῥὸς ἐστιν, ὅταν πολεμίων πόλις "ἁλῶ, τῶν ἑλόντων εἶναι καὶ τὰ Σώματα τῶν ἐν τῇ πόλει, καὶ τὰ χρήματα.' Xenoph. Κυρο Παιδ. L. 7. fin.

inſtances,

inſtances, to have been doomed to ſervitude? It remains only now to obſerve, in ſhewing this cuſtom to have been univerſal, that all thoſe nations which aſſiſted in overturning the Roman Empire, though many and various, adopted the ſame meaſures; for we find it a general maxim in their polity, that whoever ſhould fall into their hands as a priſoner of war ſhould immediately be reduced to the condition of a ſlave.

It may here, perhaps, be not unworthy of remark, that the *involuntary* were of greater antiquity than the *voluntary* ſlaves. The latter are firſt mentioned in the time of Pharaoh: they could have ariſen only in a ſtate of ſociety; when property, after its diviſion, had become ſo unequal, as to multiply the wants of individuals; and when government, after its eſtabliſhment, had given ſecurity to the poſſeſſor by the puniſhment of crimes. Whereas the former ſeem to be dated with more propriety from the days of Nimrod; who gave riſe probably to that inſeparable idea of *victory* and *ſervitude*, which we find among the nations of antiquity, and which has exiſted uni-

uniformly ſince, in one country or another, to the preſent day. *

Add to this, that they might have ariſen even in a ſtate of nature, and have been coeval with the quarrels of mankind.

CHAP. III.

BUT it was not victory alone, or any preſuppoſed right, founded in the damages of war, that afforded a pretence for invading the liberties of mankind: the honourable light in which *piracy* was conſidered in the uncivilized ages of the world, contributed not a little to the *ſlavery* of the human ſpecies. Piracy had a very early beginning. "The Grecians," † ſays Thucydides, "in their primitive ſtate, "as well as the contemporary barbarians who "inhabited the ſea coaſts and iſlands, gave "themſelves wholly to it; it was, in ſhort, "their only profeſſion and ſupport." The

* "Proud Nimrod firſt the bloody chace began,
"A mighty hunter, and his prey was man." POPE.

† Thucydides. L. 1. ſub initio.

writings

writings of Homer are ſufficient of themſelves to eſtabliſh this account. They ſhew it to have been a common practice at ſo early a period as that of the Trojan war; and abound with many lively deſcriptions of it, which, had they been as groundleſs as they are beautiful, would have frequently ſpared the ſigh of the reader of ſenſibility and reflection.

The piracies which were thus practiſed in the early ages, may be conſidered as *public* or *private*. In the former whole crews embarked for the † benefit of their reſpective tribes. They made deſcents on the ſea coaſts, carried off cattle, ſurprized whole villages, put many of the inhabitants to the ſword, and carried others into ſlavery.

In the latter, individuals only were concerned, and the emolument was their own. Theſe landed from their ſhips, and, going up into the country, concealed themſelves in the woods and thickets, where they waited every opportunity of catching the unfortunate ſhep-

† Idem. — — — "the ſtrongeſt," ſays he, "engaging in "theſe adventures, Κέρδος τῆ σφίσιν αὐτῶν ἕνεκα καὶ τοῖς ἀσθενέσι "Τροφῆς."

herd

herd or huſbandman alone. In this ſituation they ſallied out upon him, dragged him on board, conveyed him to a foreign market, and ſold him for a ſlave.

To this kind of piracy Ulyſſes alludes, in oppoſition to the former, which he had been juſt before mentioning in his queſtion to Eumœus.

* "Did pirates wait, till all thy friends were gone,
"To catch thee ſingly with thy flocks alone;
"Say, did they force thee from thy fleecy care,
"And from thy fields tranſport and ſell thee here?"

But no picture, perhaps, of this mode of depredation, is equal to that with which ‡ Xenophon preſents us in the ſimple narrative of a dance. He informs us that the Grecian army had concluded a peace with the Paphlagonians, and that they entertained their embaſſadors in conſequence with a banquet, and the exhibition of various feats of activity. "When the Thracians," ſays he, had perform-
"ed the parts allotted them in this entertain-
"ment, ſome Ænianian and Magnetian ſoldi-

* Homer. Odyſſ. L. 15. 385.

‡ Xenoph. Κυρου Ανα. L. 6. ſub initio.

"ers

"ers roſe up, and, accoutred in their proper "arms, exhibited that dance which is called "*Karpæa*. The figure of it is thus. One of "them, in the character of an huſbandman, "is ſeen to till his land, and is obſerved as "he drives his plough, to look frequently be-"hind him, as if apprehenſive of danger. "Another immediately appears in ſight, in "the character of a robber. The huſband-"man, having ſeen him previouſly advanc-"ing, ſnatches up his arms. A battle enſues "before the plough. The whole of this per-"formance is kept in perfect time with the "muſic of the flute. At length the robber, "having got the better of the huſbandman, "binds him, and drives him off with his team. "Sometimes it happens that the huſbandman "ſubdues the robber: in this caſe the ſcene "is only reverſed, as the latter is then bound "and driven off by the former."

It is ſcarcely neceſſary to obſerve, that this dance was a repreſentation of the general manners of men, in the more uncivilized ages of the world; ſhewing that the huſbandman and ſhepherd lived in continual alarm,

alarm, and that there were people in thoſe ages, who derived their pleaſures and fortunes from *kidnapping* and *enſlaving* their fellow creatures.

We may now take notice of a circumſtance in this narration, which will lead us to a review of our firſt aſſertion on this point, "that the honourable light, in which *piracy* "was conſidered in the times of barbariſm, "contributed not a little to the *ſlavery* of the "human ſpecies." The robber is repreſented here as frequently defeated in his attempts, and as reduced to that deplorable ſituation, to which he was endeavouring to bring another. This ſhews the frequent difficulty and danger of his undertakings: people would not tamely reſign their lives or liberties, without a ſtruggle. They were ſometimes prepared; were ſuperior often, in many points of view, to theſe invaders of their liberty; there were an hundred accidental circumſtances frequently in their favour. Theſe adventures therefore required all the ſkill, ſtrength, agility, valour, and every thing, in ſhort, that may be ſuppoſed to conſtitute heroiſm.

to conduct them with ſucceſs. Upon this idea piratical expeditions firſt came into repute, and their frequency afterwards, together with the danger and fortitude, that were inſeparably connected with them, brought them into ſuch credit among the barbarous nations of antiquity, that of all human profeſſions, piracy was the moſt honourable.*

The notions then, which were thus annexed to piratical expeditions, did not fail to produce thoſe conſequences which we have mentioned before. They afforded an opportunity to the views of avarice and ambition, to conceal themſelves under the maſk of virtue. They excited a ſpirit of enterprize, of all others the moſt irreſiſtible, as it ſubſiſted on the ſtrongeſt principles of action, emolument and honour. Thus could the vileſt of paſſions be gratified with impunity. People were robbed, ſtolen, murdered, under the pretended idea that theſe were

* οὐκ ἔχοντός πω Αἰσχύνην τούτου τοῦ ἔργου, φέροντος δέ τι καὶ Δόξης μᾶλλον. Thucydides L. 1. ſub initio.

καὶ εὐκλὲες τοῦτο οἱ Κίλικες ἐνόμιζον. Sextus Empiricus.

οὐκ ἄδοξον ἀλλ' ἔνδοξον τοῦτο. Schol. &c. &c.

reputable

reputable adventures: every enormity in ſhort was committed, and dreſſed up in the habiliments of honour.

But as the notions of men in the leſs barbarous ages, which followed, became more corrected and refined, the practice of piracy began gradually to diſappear. It had hitherto been ſupported on the grand columns of *emolument* and *honour*. When the latter therefore was removed, it received a conſiderable ſhock; but alas! it had ſtill a pillar for its ſupport! *avarice*, which exiſts in all ſtates, and which is ready to turn every invention to its own ends, ſtrained hard for its preſervation. It had been produced in the ages of barbariſm: it had been pointed out in thoſe ages as lucrative, and under this notion it was continued. People were ſtill ſtolen; many were intercepted (ſome, in their purſuits of pleaſure, others in the diſcharge of their ſeveral occupations) by their own countrymen; who previouſly laid in wait for them, and ſold them afterwards for ſlaves; while others, ſeized by merchants who traded on the different coaſts, were torn from their friends

and

and connections, and carried into ſlavery. The merchants of Theſſaly, if we can credit * Ariſtophanes, who never ſpared the vices of the times, were particularly infamous for the latter kind of depredation; the Athenians were notorious for the former; for they had practiſed theſe robberies to ſuch an alarming degree of danger to individuals, that it was found neceſſary to enact a ‡ law, which puniſhed kidnappers with death.—But this is ſufficient for our preſent purpoſe; it will enable us to aſſert, that there were two claſſes of *involuntary* ſlaves among the ancients, "of thoſe who were taken publickly in a ſtate "of war, and of thoſe who were privately ſto-"len in a ſtate of innocence and peace." We may now add, that the children and deſcendants of theſe compoſed a third.

* Ariſtoph. Plut. Act. 2. Scene 5.
‡ Zenoph. Απόμνημον, L. 1.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

IT will be proper to ſay ſomething here concerning the ſituation of the unfortunate men, who were thus doomed to a life of ſervitude. To enumerate their various employments, and to deſcribe the miſeries which they endured in conſequence, either from the ſeverity, or the long and conſtant application of their labour, would exceed the bounds we have propoſed to the preſent work. We ſhall confine ourſelves to their *perſonal treatment*, as depending on the power of their maſters, and the protection of the law. Their treatment, if conſidered in this light, will equally excite our pity and abhorrence. They were beaten, ſtarved, tortured, murdered at diſcretion; they were dead in a civil ſenſe; they had neither name nor tribe; were incapable of a judicial proceſs; were in ſhort without appeal. Poor unfortunate men! to be deprived of all poſſible protection! to ſuffer the bittereſt of injuries without the poſſibility of redreſs! to be condemned unheard! to be murdered with impunity! to be conſidered as dead in that

ſtate, the very members of which they were ſupporting by their labours!

Yet ſuch was their general ſituation: there were two places however, where their condition, if conſidered in this point of view, was more tolerable. The Ægyptian ſlave, though perhaps of all others the greateſt drudge, yet if he had time to reach the * temple of Hercules, found a certain retreat from the perſecution of his maſter; and he received additional comfort from the reflection, that his life, whether he could reach it or not, could not be taken with impunity. Wiſe and ſalutary law! how often muſt it have curbed the inſolence of power, and ſtopped thoſe paſſions in their progreſs, which had otherwiſe been deſtructive to the ſlave!

But though the perſons of ſlaves were thus greatly ſecured in Ægypt, yet there was no place ſo favourable to them as Athens. They were allowed a greater liberty of ſpeech; †

* Herodotus. L. 2. 113.

† "Atq id ne vos miremini, Homines ſervulos
"Potare, amare, atq ad cœnam condicere.
"Licet hoc Athenis.
"Plautus. Sticho.

they

they had their convivial meetings, their amours, their hours of relaxation, pleaſantry, and mirth; they were treated, in ſhort, with ſo much humanity in general, as to occaſion that obſervation of Demoſthenes, in his ſecond Philippic, "that the condition of a ſlave, at "Athens, was preferable to that of a free citi-"zen, in many other countries." But if any exception happened (which was ſometimes the caſe) from the general treatment deſcribed; if perſecution took the place of lenity, and made the fangs of ſervitude more pointed than before,* they had then their temple, like the Ægyptian, for refuge; where the legiſlature was ſo attentive as to examine their complaints, and to order them, if they were founded on juſtice, to be ſold to another maſter. Nor was this all: they had a privilege infinitely greater than the whole of theſe. They were allowed an opportunity of working for themſelves, and if their diligence had procur-

* "Εἰ μὴ κράτιστον ἐστιν εἰς τὸ Θησεῖον
"Δραμεῖν, ἐκεῖ δ' ἕως ἂν ἴνρωμεν πρᾶσιν,
"μένειν." Ariſtoph. Horæ.
Καικὰ τοιάδε πάσχειν ὐδὲ πρᾶσιν
Αἰτῶσιν. Eupolis. πολεις.

ed them a ſum equivalent withtheir ranſom, they could immediately onpaying it down, * demand their freedom for ever. This law was, of all others, the moſt important; as the proſpect of liberty which it afforded muſt have been a continual ſource of the moſt pleaſing reflections, and have greatly ſweetened the draught, even of the moſt bitter ſlavery.

Thus then, to the eternal honour of Ægypt and Athens, they were the only places that we can find where ſlaves were conſidered with any humanity at all. The reſt of the world ſeemed to vie with each other, in the debaſement and oppreſſion of theſe unfortunate people. They uſed them with as much ſeverity as they choſe; they meaſured their treatment only by their own paſſion and caprice; and, by leaving them, on every occaſion, without the poſſibility of an appeal, they rendered their

* To this privilege Plautus alludes in his *Caſina*, where he introduces a ſlave, ſpeaking in the following manner:

" Quid tu me verò libertate territas?
" Quod ſi tu nolis, filiuſque etiam tuus
" Vobis *invitis*, atq amborum *ingratiis*,
" *Una libella liber poſſum fieri.*"

ſitua-

ſituation the moſt melancholy and intolerable, that can poſſibly be conceived.

CHAP. V.

AS we have mentioned the barbarous and inhuman treatment that generally fell to the lot of ſlaves, it may not be amiſs to inquire into the various circumſtances by which it was produced.

The firſt circumſtance from whence it originated, was the *commerce:* for if men could be conſidered as *poſſeſſions*; if, like *cattle*, they could be *bought* and *ſold*, it will not be difficult to ſuppoſe, that they could be held in the ſame conſideration or treated in the ſame manner. The commerce therefore, which was begun in the primitive ages of the world, by claſſing them with the brutal ſpecies, and by habituating the mind to conſider the terms of *brute* and *ſlave* as *ſynonimous*, ſoon cauſed them to be viewed in a low and deſpicable light, and as greatly inferior to the human ſpecies. Hence proceeded that treatment, which might not unreaſonably be ſuppoſed to ariſe from ſo low

low an eſtimation. They were tamed, like beaſts, by the ſtings of hunger and the laſh, and their education was directed to the ſame end, to make them commodious inſtruments of labour for their poſſeſſors.

This *treatment*, which thus proceeded in the ages of barbariſm, from the low eſtimation in which ſlaves were unfortunately held from the circumſtances of the commerce, did not fail of producing, in the ſame inſtant, its *own* effect. It depreſſed their minds; it numbed their faculties; and, by preventing thoſe ſparks of genius from blazing forth, which had otherwiſe been conſpicuous, it gave them the appearance of being endued with inferior capacities than the reſt of mankind. This effect of the *treatment* had made ſo conſiderable a progreſs, as to have been a matter of obſervation in the days of Homer.

* For half *his* ſenſes Jove conveys away,
Whom once he dooms to ſee the *ſervile* day.

* Homer. Odyſ. P. 322. In the lateſt edition of Homer, the word, which we have tranſlated *ſenſes*, is Αρετη, or *virtue*, but the old and proper reading is Νοος, as appears from Plato de Legibus, ch. 6, where he quotes it on a ſimilar occaſion.

Thus,

Thus then did the *commerce*, by claſſing them originally with *brutes*, and the conſequent *treatment*, by cramping their *abilities*, and hindering them from becoming *conſpicuous*, give to theſe unfortunate people, at a very early period, the moſt unfavourable *appearance*. The riſing generations who received both the commerce and treatment from their anceſtors, and who had always been accuſtomed to behold their *effects*, did not conſider theſe *effects* as *incidental*: they judged only from what they ſaw; they believed the *appearances* to be *real*; and hence aroſe the combined principle, that ſlaves were an *inferior* order of men, and perfectly void of *underſtanding*. Upon this *principle* it was, that the former treatment began to be fully confirmed and eſtabliſhed; and as this *principle* was handed down and diſſeminated, ſo it became, in ſucceeding ages, an *excuſe* for any ſeverity, that deſpotiſm might ſuggeſt.

We may obſerve here, that as all nations had this excuſe in common, as ariſing from the *circumſtances* above-mentioned, ſo the Greeks firſt, and the Romans afterwards, had an

additional

additional excuſe, as ariſing from their own *vanity*.

The former having conquered Troy, and having united themſelves under one common name and intereſt, began, from that period, to diſtinguiſh the reſt of the world by the title of *barbarians*; inferring by ſuch an appellation, * "that they were men who were only "noble in their own country; that they had "no right, from their *nature*, to authority or "command; that, on the contrary, ſo low "were their capacities, they were *deſtined* by "nature *to obey*, and to live in a ſtate of per-"petual drudgery and ſubjugation." Conformable with this opinion was the treatment, which was accordingly preſcribed to a *barbarian*. The philoſopher Ariſtotle himſelf, in the advice which he gave to his pupil Alexander, before he went upon his Aſiatic expedition, † intreated him to "uſe the *Greeks*, "as it became a *general*, but the *barbarians*, as

* Ariſtotle. Polit. Ch. 2. et inſeq.

† Ἕλλησιν ἡγεμονικῶς, τοῖς δὲ βαρβάροις δεσποτικῶς χρᾶσθαι· καὶ τῶν μὲν ὡς φίλων καὶ οἰκείων ἐπιμελεῖσθαι, τοῖς δὲ ὡς ζώοις ἢ φυτοῖς προσφέρεσθαι. Plutarch. de Fortun. Alexand. Orat. 1.

"it

" it became a *maſter*; conſider, ſays he, the " former as *friends* and *domeſtics*; but the " latter, as *brutes* and *plants*;" inferring that the Greeks, from the ſuperiority of their capacities, had a *natural* right to dominion, and that the reſt of the world, from the inferiority of their own, were to be conſidered and treated as the *irrational* part of the creation.

Now, if we conſider that this was the treatment, which they judged to be abſolutely proper for people of this deſcription, and that their ſlaves were uniformly thoſe, whom they termed *barbarians*; being generally ſuch as were either kidnapped from *Barbary*, or purchaſed from the *barbarian* conquerors in their wars with one another; we ſhall immediately ſee with what an additional excuſe their own vanity had furniſhed them for the ſallies of caprice and paſſion.

To refute theſe cruel ſentiments of the ancients, and to ſhew that their ſlaves were by no means an inferior order of beings than themſelves, may perhaps be conſidered as an unneceſſary taſk; particularly, as having ſhewn, that the cauſes of this inferior appear-

ance

ance were *incidental*, ariſing, on the one hand, from the combined effects of the *treatment* and *commerce*, and, on the other, from *vanity* and *pride*, we ſeem to have refuted them already. But we truſt that ſome few obſervations, in vindication of theſe unfortunate people, will neither be unacceptable nor improper.

How then ſhall we begin the refutation? Shall we ſay with Seneca, who ſaw many of the ſlaves in queſtion, "What is a *knight*, "or a *libertine*, or a *ſlave?* Are they not "names, aſſumed either from *injury* or *am-* "*bition?*" Or, ſhall we ſay with him on another occaſion, "Let us conſider that he, whom "we call our ſlave, is born in the ſame man- "ner as ourſelves; that he enjoys the ſame "ſky, with all its heavenly luminaries; that "he breathes, that he lives in the ſame man- "ner as ourſelves, and in the ſame manner "that he expires." Theſe conſiderations, we confeſs, would furniſh us with a plentiful ſource of arguments in the caſe before us; but we decline their aſſiſtance. How then ſhall we begin? Shall we enumerate the many inſtances of fidelity, patience, or valour, that

are

are recorded of the *ſervile* race? Shall we enumerate the many important ſervices, that they rendered both to the individuals and the community under whom they lived? Here would be a ſecond ſource, from whence we could collect ſufficient materials to ſhew, that there was no inferiority in their nature. But we decline to uſe them. We ſhall content ourſelves with ſome few inſtances that relate to the *genius* only: we ſhall mention the names of thoſe of a *ſervile* condition, whoſe writings, having eſcaped the wreck of time, and having been handed down even to the preſent age, are now to be ſeen as ſo many living monuments, that neither the Grecian nor Roman genius was ſuperior to their own.

The firſt whom we ſhall mention here is the famous Æſop. He was a Phrygian by birth, and lived in the time of Crœſus, king of Lydia, to whom he dedicated his fables. The writings of this great man, in whatever light we conſider them, will be equally entitled to our admiration. But we are well aware that the very mention of him as a writer of fables may depreciate him in the

eyes

eyes of ſome. To ſuch we ſhall propoſe a queſtion, "Whether this ſpecies of writing "has not been more beneficial to mankind; "or whether it has not produced more im- "portant events, than any other?"

With reſpect to the firſt conſideration, it is evident that theſe fables, as conſiſting of plain and ſimple tranſactions, are particularly eaſy to be underſtood; as conveyed in images, they pleaſe and ſeduce the mind; and as containing a *moral*, eaſily deducible on the ſide of virtue; that they afford at the ſame time the moſt weighty precepts of philoſophy.—Here then are the two grand points of compoſition, "a manner of expreſſion to be ap- "prehended by the loweſt capacities, and * "(what is conſidered as a victory in the art) "an happy conjunction of utility and plea- "ſure." Hence Quintilian recommends them as ſingularly uſeful, and as admirably adapted to the puriele age; as a juſt gradation between the language of the nurſe and the preceptor, and as furniſhing maxims of prudence and virtue, at a time when the ſpeculative

* Omne tulit punctum, qui miſcuit utile dulci. HORACE.

prin-

principles of philoſophy are too difficult to be underſtood. Hence alſo, having been introduced by moſt civilized nations into their ſyſtem of education, they have produced that general benefit to which we at firſt alluded. Nor have they been of leſs conſequence in maturity; but particularly to thoſe of inferior capacities, or little erudition, whom they have frequently ſerved as a guide to conduct them in life, and as a medium, through which an explanation might be made on many and important occaſions.

With reſpect to the latter conſideration, which is eaſily deducible from hence, we ſhall only appeal to the wonderful effect which the fable pronounced by Demoſthenes againſt Philip of Macedon, produced among his hearers; or to the fable which was ſpoken by Menenius Agrippa to the Roman populace; by which an illiterate multitude were brought back to their duty as citizens, when no other ſpecies of oratory could prevail.

To theſe truly *ingenious* and *philoſophical* works of Æſop, we ſhall add thoſe of his imitator Phœdrus, which in purity and elegance of

of ſtyle are inferior to none. We ſhall add alſo the Lyric *Poetry* of Alcman, which is no *ſervile* compoſition; the ſublime *Morals* of Epictetus, and the incomparable *comedies* of Terence.

Thus then does it appear that the *excuſe* which was uniformly ſtarted in defence of the *treatment* of ſlaves had no foundation whatever either in truth or juſtice. The inſtances that we have mentioned above are ſufficient to ſhew that there was no inferiority, either in their *nature* or their underſtandings: and at the ſame time that they refute the principles of the ancients, they afford a valuable leſſon to thoſe who have been accuſtomed to form too precipitate a judgment on the abilities of men: for, alas! how often has *ſecret anguiſh* depreſſed the ſpirits of thoſe whom they have frequently cenſured, from their gloomy and dejected appearance! and how often, on the other hand, has their judgment reſulted from their own *vanity* and *pride!*

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

WE proceed now to the conſideration of the *commerce:* in conſequence of which, people, endued with the ſame feelings and faculties as ourſelves, were made ſubject to the laws and limitations of *poſſeſſion.*

This commerce of the human ſpecies was of a very early date. It was founded on the idea that men were *property*; and as this idea was coeval with the firſt order of *involuntary* ſlaves, it muſt have ariſen (if the date which we previouſly affixed to that order be right) in the firſt practices of barter. The Story of Joſeph, as recorded in the ſacred writings, whom his brothers ſold from an envious ſuſpicion of his future greatneſs, is an ample teſtimony of the truth of this conjecture. It ſhews that there were men, even at that early period, who travelled up and down as merchants collecting not only balm, myrrh, ſpicery, and other wares, but the human ſpecies alſo,

alſo, for the purpoſes of traffic. The inſtant determination of the brothers, on the firſt ſight of the merchants, *to ſell him*, and the immediate acquieſcence of theſe who purchaſed him for a foreign market, prove that this commerce had been then eſtabliſhed, not only in that part of the country where this tranſaction happened, but in that alſo whither the merchants were then travelling with their camels, namely Ægypt: and they ſhew farther, that as all cuſtoms require time for their eſtabliſhment, ſo it muſt have exiſted in the ages previous to that of Pharaoh; that is, in thoſe ages in which we fixed the firſt date of *involuntary* ſervitude. This commerce then, as appears by the preſent inſtance, exiſted in the earlieſt practices of barter, and had deſcended to the Ægyptians through as long a period of time, as was ſufficient to have made it, in the times alluded to, an eſtabliſhed cuſtom. Thus was Ægypt, in thoſe days, the place of the greateſt reſort; the grand emporium of trade, to which people were driving their merchandize, as to a centre; and thus did it afford, among other opportunities of traffic, the

the *firſt market* that is recorded, for the ſale of the human ſpecies.

This market, which was thus ſupplied by the conſtant concourſe of merchants, who reſorted to it from various parts, could not fail, by theſe means, to have been conſiderable. It received, afterwards, an additional ſupply from thoſe piracies, which we mentioned to have exiſted in the uncivilized ages of the world, and which, in fact, it greatly promoted and encouraged; and it became, from theſe united circumſtances, ſo famous as to have been known, within a few centuries from the time of Pharaoh, both to the Grecian colonies in Aſia, and the Grecian iſlands. Homer mentions Cyprus and Ægypt as the common markets for ſlaves, about the time of the Trojan war. Thus Antinous, offended with Ulyſſes, threatens to ſend him * to one of theſe places, if he does not inſtantly depart from his table. The ſame poet alſo, in his ‡ hymn to Bacchus, mentions them again, but in a

* Μὴ τάχα πικρὴν Αἴγυπτόν τε καὶ Κύπρον ἵδηαι. Hom. Odyſſ. L. 17. 448.

‡ L. 26.

more unequivocal manner, as the common markets for ſlaves. He takes occaſion, in that hymn, to deſcribe the pirates method of ſcouring the coaſt, from the circumſtance of their having kidnapped Bacchus, as a noble youth, for whom they expected an immenſe ranſom. The captain of the veſſel, having dragged him on board, is repreſented as addreſſing himſelf thus, to the ſteerſman:

"Haul in the tackle, hoiſt aloft the ſail,
"Then take your helm, and watch the doubtful gale!
"To mind the captive prey, be our's the care,
"While you to *Ægypt* or to *Cyprus* ſteer;
"There ſhall he go, unleſs his friends he'll tell,
"Whoſe ranſom-gifts will pay us full as well."

It may not perhaps be conſidered as a digreſſion, to mention in few words, by itſelf, the wonderful concordance of the writings of Moſes and Homer with the caſe before us: not that the former, from their divine authority, want additional ſupport, but becauſe it cannot be unpleaſant to ſee them confirmed by a perſon, who, being one of the earlieſt writers, and living in a very remote age, was the firſt that could afford us any additional

proof

proof of the circumſtances above-mentioned. Ægypt is repreſented, in the firſt book of the ſacred writings, as a market for ſlaves, and, in the * ſecond, as famous for the ſeverity of its ſervitude. ‡ The ſame line, which we have already cited from Homer, conveys to us the ſame ideas. It points it out as a market for the human ſpecies, and by the epithet of "*bitter* Ægypt," († which epithet is peculiarly annexed to it on this occaſion) alludes in the ſtrongeſt manner to that ſeverity and rigour, of which the ſacred hiſtorian tranſmitted us the firſt account.

But, to return. Though Ægypt was the firſt market recorded for this ſpecies of traffic; and though Ægypt, and Cyprus afterwards, were particularly diſtinguiſhed for it, in the times of the Trojan war, yet they were not the only places, even at that period, where men were bought and ſold. The Odyſſey of

* Exodus. Ch. 1.

‡ Vide note 1ſt. page 53.

† This ſtrikes us the more forcibly, as it is ſtiled ἰυρρεῖτην and περικαλλέα, "*beautiful and well watered*," in all other paſſages where it is mentioned, but this.

Homer ſhews that it was then practiſed in many of the iſlands of the Ægœan ſea; and the Iliad, that it had taken place among thoſe Grecians on the continent of Europe, who had embarked from thence on the Trojan expedition. This appears particularly at the end of the ſeventh book. A fleet is deſcribed there, as having juſt arrived from Lemnos, with a ſupply of wine for the Grecian camp. The merchants are deſcribed alſo, as immediately expoſing it to ſale, and as receiving in exchange, among other articles of barter, "*a number of ſlaves.*"

It will now be ſufficient to obſerve, that, as other ſtates aroſe, and as circumſtances contributed to make them known, this cuſtom is diſcovered to have exiſted among them; that it travelled over all Aſia; that it ſpread through the Grecian and Roman world; was in uſe among the barbarous nations, which overturned the Roman empire; and was practiſed therefore, at the ſame period, throughout all Europe.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

THIS *ſlavery* and *commerce*, which had continued for ſo long a time, and which was thus practiſed in Europe at ſo late a period as that, which ſucceeded the grand revolution in the weſtern world, began, as the northern nations were ſettled in their conqueſts, to decline, and, on their full eſtabliſhment, were aboliſhed. A difference of opinion has ariſen reſpecting the cauſe of their abolition; ſome having aſſerted, that they were the neceſſary conſequences of the *feudal ſyſtem*; while others, ſuperior both in number and in argument, have maintained that they were the natural effects of *Chriſtianity*. The mode of argument, which the former adopt on this occaſion, is as follows: "The multitude of lit-
"tle ſtates, which ſprang up from one great
"one at this Æra, occaſioned infinite bicker-
"ings and matter for contention. There was
"not a ſtate or ſeignory, which did not want
"all the hands they could muſter, either to
"defend their own right, or to diſpute that
"of their neighbours. Thus every man was
"taken

" taken into the ſervice: whom they armed " they muſt truſt: and there could be no truſt " but in free men. Thus the barrier between " the two natures was thrown down, and " *ſlavery* was no more heard of, in the *weſt*."

That this was not the *neceſſary* conſequence of ſuch a ſituation, is apparent. The political ſtate of Greece, in its early hiſtory, was the ſame as that of Europe, when divided, by the feudal ſyſtem, into an infinite number of ſmall and independent kingdoms. There was the ſame matter therefore for contention, and the ſame call for all the hands that could be muſtered: the Grecians, in ſhort, in the *heroic*, were in the ſame ſituation in theſe reſpects as the *feudal barons* in the *Gothic* times. Had this therefore been a *neceſſary* effect, there had been a ceſſation of ſervitude in Greece, in thoſe ages, in which we have already ſhewn that it exiſted.

But with reſpect to *Chriſtianity*, many and great are the arguments, that it occaſioned ſo deſirable an event. It taught, " that all men " were originally equal; that the Deity was " no reſpecter of perſons, and that, as all men

" were

" were to give an account of their actions " hereafter, it was neceſſary that they ſhould " be free." Theſe doctrines could not fail of having their proper influence on thoſe, who firſt embraced *Chriſtianity*, from a *conviction* of its truth; and on thoſe of their deſcendents afterwards, who, by engaging in the *cruſades*, and hazarding their lives and fortunes there, ſhewed, at leaſt, an *attachment* to that religion. We find them accordingly actuated by theſe principles: we have a poſitive proof, that the *feudal ſyſtem* had no ſhare in the honour of ſuppreſſing ſlavery, but that *Chriſtianity* was the only cauſe; for the greateſt part of the *charters* which were granted for the freedom of ſlaves in thoſe times (many of which are ſtill extant) were granted, " *pro amore Dei, pro mer-* " *cede animæ.*" They were founded, in ſhort, on religious conſiderations, " that they might " procure the favour of the Deity, which they " conceived themſelves to have forfeited, by " the ſubjugation of thoſe whom they found " to be the objects of the divine benevolence " and attention equally with themſelves.

Theſe

Theſe conſiderations, which had thus their firſt origin in *Chriſtianity*, began to produce their effects, as the different nations were converted; and procured that general liberty at laſt, which, at the cloſe of the twelfth century, was conſpicuous in the weſt of Europe. What a glorious and important change!—Thoſe who would have had otherwiſe no hopes, but that their miſeries would be terminated by death, were then freed from their ſervile condition; thoſe who, by the laws of war, would have had otherwiſe an immediate proſpect of ſervitude from the hands of their imperious conquerors, were then *exchanged*; a cuſtom which has happily deſcended to the preſent day. Thus, a "numerous claſs of "men, who formerly had no political exiſt-"ence, and were employed merely as inſtru-"ments of labour, became uſeful citizens, and "contributed towards augmenting the force or "riches of the ſociety, which adopted them as "members;" and thus did the greater part of the Europeans, by their conduct on this occaſion, aſſert not only liberty for themſelves, but for their fellow-creatures alſo.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

BUT if men therefore, at a time when under the influence of religion they exerciſed their ſerious thoughts, aboliſhed ſlavery, how impious muſt they appear, who revived it; and what arguments will not preſent themſelves againſt their conduct! * The Portugueſe, within two centuries after its ſuppreſſion in Europe, in imitation of thoſe *piracies*, which we have ſhewn to have exiſted in the *uncivilized* ages of the world, made their deſcents on Africa, and committing depredations on the coaſt, † *firſt* carried the wretched inhabitants into ſlavery.

This

* The following ſhort hiſtory of the African ſervitude, is taken from Aſtley's Collection of Voyages, and from the united teſtimonies of Smyth, Adanſon, Boſman, Moore, and others, who were agents to the different factories eſtabliſhed there; who reſided many years in the country; and publiſhed their reſpective hiſtories at their return. Theſe writers, if they are partial at all, may be conſidered as favourable rather to their own countrymen, than the unfortunate Africans.

† We would not wiſh to be underſtood, that ſlavery was unknown in Africa before the *piratical* expeditions of the *Portugueſe*, as it appears from the *Nubian's Geography*, that both the ſlavery and

This practice, however trifling and partial it might appear at firſt, ſoon became ſerious and general. A melancholy inſtance of the depravity of human nature; as it ſhews, that neither the laws nor religion of any country, however excellent the forms of each, are ſufficient to bind the conſciences of ſome; but that there are always men, of every age, country, and perſuaſion, who are ready to ſacrifice their deareſt principles at the ſhrine of gain. Our own anceſtors, together with the Spaniards, French, and moſt of the maritime powers of Europe, ſoon followed the *piratical* example; and thus did the Europeans, to their eternal infamy, renew a cuſtom, which their *own* anceſtors had ſo lately exploded, from a *conſcientiouſneſs* of its *impiety*.

and commerce had been eſtabliſhed among the natives with one another. We mean only to aſſert, that the *Portugueſe* were the firſt of the *Europeans*, who made their *piratical* expeditions, and ſhewed the way to that *ſlavery*, which now makes ſo diſgraceful a figure in the weſtern colonies of the *Europeans*. In the term "Europeans," wherever it ſhall occur in the remaining part of this firſt diſſertation, we include the *Portugueſe*, and *thoſe nations only*, who followed their example.

The

The unfortunate Africans, terrified at theſe repeated depredations, fled in confuſion from the coaſt, and ſought, in the interior parts of the country, a retreat from the perſecution of their invaders. But, alas, they were miſerably diſappointed! There are few retreats that can eſcape the penetrating eye of avarice.—The Europeans ſtill purſued them; they entered their rivers; ſailed up into the heart of the country; ſurprized the unfortunate Africans again; and carried them into ſlavery.

But this conduct, though ſucceſsful at firſt, defeated afterwards its own ends. It created a more general alarm, and pointed out, at the ſame inſtant, the beſt method of ſecurity from future depredations. The banks of the rivers were accordingly deſerted, as the coaſts had been before; and thus were the *Chriſtian* invaders left without a proſpect of their prey.

In this ſituation however, expedients were not wanting. They now formed to themſelves the reſolution of ſettling in the country; of ſecuring themſelves by fortified poſts; of changing their ſyſtem of force into that of

pretended

pretended liberality; and of opening, by every ſpecies of bribery and corruption, a communication with the natives. Theſe plans were put into immediate execution. The Europeans erected their * forts; landed their merchandize; and endeavoured, by a peaceable deportment, by preſents, and by every appearance of munificence, to ſeduce the attachment and confidence of the Africans. Theſe ſchemes had the deſired effect. The gaudy trappings of European art, not only caught their attention, but excited their curioſity: they dazzled the eyes and bewitched the ſenſes, not only of thoſe to whom they were given, but of thoſe to whom they were ſhewn. Thus followed a ſpeedy intercourſe with each other, and a confidence, highly favourable to the views of avarice or ambition.

It was now time for the Europeans to embrace the opportunity which this intercourſe had thus afforded them, of carrying their

* The *Portugueſe* erected their firſt fort at *D'Elmina*, in the year 1481, about forty years after Alonzo Gonzales had pointed the Southern Africans out to his countrymen as articles of commerce.

ſchemes

ſchemes into execution, and of fixing them on ſuch a permanent foundation as ſhould ſecure them future ſucceſs. They had already diſcovered, in the different interviews obtained, the chiefs of the African tribes. They paid their court therefore to theſe, and ſo compleatly intoxicated their ſenſes with luxuries, which they brought from home, as to be able to ſeduce them to their deſigns. A treaty of peace and commerce was immediately concluded: it was agreed, that the kings, on their part, ſhould, from this period, ſentence *priſoners of war* and *convicts* to *European ſervitude*; and that the Europeans ſhould ſupply them, in return, with the luxuries of the north. This agreement immediately took place; and thus began that *commerce* which makes ſo conſiderable a figure at the preſent day.

But happy had the Africans been, if thoſe only who had been juſtly convicted of crimes, or taken in a juſt war, had been ſentenced to the ſeverities of ſervitude! How many of thoſe miſeries, which afterwards attended them, had been never known; and how

would

would their hiſtory have ſaved thoſe ſighs and emotions of pity, which muſt now ever accompany its peruſal. The Europeans, on the eſtabliſhment of their weſtern colonies, required a greater number of ſlaves than a ſtrict adherence to the treaty could produce. The princes therefore had only the choice of relinquiſhing the commerce, or of conſenting to become unjuſt. They had long experienced the emoluments of the trade; they had acquired a taſte for the luxuries it afforded; and they now beheld an opportunity of gratifying it, but in a more extenſive manner. *Avarice* therefore, which was too powerful for *juſtice* on this occaſion, immediately turned the ſcale: not only thoſe, who were fairly convicted of offences, were now ſentenced to ſervitude, but even thoſe who were *ſuſpected*. New crimes were invented, that new puniſhments might ſucceed. Thus was every appearance ſoon conſtrued into reality; every ſhadow into a ſubſtance; and often virtue into a crime.

Such alſo was the caſe with reſpect to priſoners of war. Not only thoſe were now delivered

vered into ſlavery, who were taken in a ſtate of public enmity and injuſtice, but thoſe alſo, who, conſcious of no injury whatever, were taken in the *arbitrary* ſkirmiſhes of theſe *venal* ſovereigns. War was now made, not as formerly, from the motives of retaliation and defence, but for the ſake of obtaining priſoners alone, and the advantages reſulting from their ſale. If a ſhip from Europe came but into ſight, it was now conſidered as a ſufficient motive for a war, and as a ſignal only for an inſtantaneous commencement of hoſtilities.

But if the African kings could be capable of ſuch injuſtice, what vices are there that their conſciences would reſtrain, or what enormities that we might not expect to be committed? When men once conſent to be unjuſt, they loſe, at the ſame inſtant with their virtue, a conſiderable portion of that ſenſe of ſhame, which, till then, had been found a ſucceſsful protector againſt the ſallies of vice. From that awful period almoſt every expectation is forlorn: the heart is left unguarded: its great protector is no more: the *vices* therefore, which ſo long encompaſſed it in vain,

obtain

obtain an eaſy victory: in crouds they pour into the defenceleſs avenues, and take poſſeſſion of the ſoul; there is nothing now too vile for them to meditate, too impious to perform. Such was the ſituation of the deſpotic ſovereigns of Africa. They had once ventured to paſs the bounds of virtue, and they ſoon proceeded to enormity. This was particularly conſpicuous in that general conduct, which they uniformly obſerved, after any unſucceſsful conflict. Influenced only by the venal motives of European traffic, they firſt made war upon the neighbouring tribes, contrary to every principle of juſtice; and if, by the flight of the enemy, or by other contingencies, they were diſappointed of their prey, they made no heſitation of immediately turning their arms againſt their own ſubjects. The firſt villages they came to were always marked on this occaſion as the firſt objects of their avarice. They were immediately ſurrounded, were afterwards ſet on fire, and the wretched inhabitants ſeized, as they were eſcaping from the flames. Theſe, conſiſting of whole families, fathers, brothers, huſbands, wives,

wives, and children, were inſtantly driven in chains to the merchants, and conſigned to ſlavery.

To theſe calamities, which thus aroſe from the tyranny of the kings, we may now ſubjoin thoſe which aroſe from the avarice of private perſons. Many were kidnapped by their own countrymen, who encouraged by the merchants of Europe, previouſly lay in wait for them, and ſold them afterwards for ſlaves, while the ſeamen of the different ſhips, by every poſſible artifice, enticed others on board, and tranſported them to the regions of ſervitude.

As theſe practices are in full force at the preſent day, it appears that there are four orders of *involuntary* ſlaves on the African continent; of * *convicts*; of *priſoners of war*; of thoſe who are publicly ſeized by virtue of

* In the ancient ſervitude we reckoned *convicts* among the *voluntary* ſlaves, becauſe they had it in their power, by a virtuous conduct, to have avoided ſo melancholy a ſituation; in the *African*, we include them in the *involuntary*, becauſe, as virtues are frequently conſtrued into crimes, from the venal motives of the traffic, no perſon whatever poſſeſſes ſuch a *power* or *choice*.

the *authority* of their prince; and of thoſe who are privately *kidnapped* by individuals.

It remains only to obſerve on this head, that in the ſale and purchaſe of theſe the African commerce or *Slave Trade* conſiſts; that they are delivered to the merchants of Europe in exchange for their various commodities; that theſe tranſport them to their colonies in the weſt, where their *ſlavery* takes place; and that a fifth order ariſes there, compoſed of all ſuch as are born to the native Africans, after their tranſportation and ſlavery have commenced.

Having thus explained as much of the hiſtory of modern ſervitude as is ſufficient for the proſecution of our deſign, we ſhould have cloſed our account here, but that a work, juſt publiſhed, has furniſhed us with a ſingular anecdote of the coloniſts of a neighbouring nation, which we cannot but relate. The learned * author having deſcribed the method

* Andrew Sparrman, M. D. profeſſor of Phyſic at Stockholm, fellow of the Royal Academy of Sciences in Sweden, and inſpector of its cabinet of natural hiſtory, whoſe voyage was tranſlated into Engliſh, and publiſhed in 1785.

which

which the Dutch coloniſts at the Cape make uſe of to take the Hottentots and enſlave them, takes occaſion, in many ſubſequent parts of the work, to mention the dreadful effects of the practice of ſlavery; which, as he juſtly remarks, "leads to all manner of "miſdemeanours and wickedneſs. Pregnant "women (ſays he) and children in their ten-"dereſt years, were not at this time, neither "indeed are they ever exempt from the ef-"fects of the hatred and ſpirit of vengeance "conſtantly harboured by the coloniſts, with "reſpect to the † Boſhies-man nation; *ex-"cepting ſuch indeed as are marked out to be "carried away into bondage.*"

"Does a coloniſt at any time get ſight of "a Boſhies-man, he takes fire immediately, "and ſpirits up his horſe and dogs, in order "to hunt him with more ardor and fury than "he would a wolf or any other wild beaſt? "On an open plain a few coloniſts on horſe-"back are always ſure to get the better of "the greateſt number of Boſhies-men that can

† Boſhies-man, or *wild Hottentot.*

" be brought together; as the former always
" keep at the diſtance of about an hundred,
" or an hundred and fifty paces (juſt as they
" find it convenient) and charging their heavy
" fire-arms with a very large kind of ſhot,
" jump off their horſes, and reſt their pieces
" in their uſual manner on their ramrods, in
" order that they may ſhoot with the greater
" certainty; ſo that the balls diſcharged by
" them will ſometimes, as I have been aſſur-
" ed, go through the bodies of ſix, ſeven, or
" eight of the enemy at a time, eſpecially as
" theſe latter know no better than to keep
" cloſe together in a body."———

" And not only is the capture of the Hot-
" tentots conſidered by them merely as a party
" of pleaſure, but in cold blood they deſtroy
" the bands which nature has knit between
" their huſbands, and their wives and chil-
" dren, *&c.*"

With what horror do theſe paſſages ſeem to ſtrike us! What indignation do they ſeem to raiſe in our breaſts, when we reflect that a part of the human ſpecies are conſidered as

game,

game, and that *parties of pleaſure* are made for their *deſtruction!* The lion does not imbrue his claws in blood, unleſs called upon by hunger or provoked by interruption; whereas the mercileſs Dutch, more ſavage than the brutes themſelves, not only murder their fellow-creatures without any provocation or neceſſity, but even make a diverſion of their ſufferings, and enjoy their pain.

END OF THE FIRST PART.

PART

PART II.

THE AFRICAN COMMERCE, OR SLAVE TRADE.

CHAP. I.

As we explained the Hiſtory of Slavery in the firſt part of this Eſſay, as far as it was neceſſary for our purpoſe, we ſhall now take the queſtion into conſideration which we propoſed at firſt, as the ſubject of our inquiry, *viz.* how far the commerce and ſlavery of the human ſpecies, as revived by ſome of the nations

nations of Europe in the perſons of the unfortunate Africans, and as revived, in a great meaſure, on the principles of antiquity, are conſiſtent with the laws of nature, or the common notions of equity, as eſtabliſhed among men.

This queſtion reſolves itſelf into two ſeparate parts for diſcuſſion, into *the African commerce (as explained in the hiſtory of ſlavery)* and *the ſubſequent ſlavery in the colonies, as founded on the equity of the commerce.* The former, of courſe, will be firſt examined. For this purpoſe we ſhall enquire into the riſe, nature, and deſign of government. Such an inquiry will be particularly uſeful in the preſent place; it will afford us that general knowledge of ſubordination and liberty, which is neceſſary in the caſe before us, and will be found, as it were, a ſource to which we may frequently refer for many and valuable arguments.

It appears that mankind were originally free, and that they poſſeſſed an equal right to the ſoil and produce of the earth. For proof of this, we need only appeal to the *divine* writngs; to the *golden age* of the poets, which,

which, like other fables of the times, had its origin in truth; and to the inſtitution of the *Saturnalia*, and of other ſimilar feſtivals; all of which are ſo many monuments of this original equality of men. Hence then there was no rank, no diſtinction, no ſuperior. Every man wandered where he choſe, changing his reſidence as a ſpot attracted his fancy, or ſuited his convenience, uncontroled by his neighbour, unconnected with any but his family. Hence alſo (as every thing was common) he collected what he choſe without injury, and enjoyed without injury what he had collected. Such was the firſt ſituation of mankind; * a ſtate of *diſſociation* and *independence*.

In this diſſociated ſtate it is impoſſible that men could have long continued. The dangers to which they muſt have frequently been expoſed, by the attacks of fierce and rapacious beaſts, by the prœdatory attempts of their own ſpecies, and by the diſputes of contiguous and

* This concluſion concerning the diſſociated ſtate of mankind, is confirmed by all the early writers, with whoſe deſcriptions of primitive times no other concluſion is reconcileable.

inde-

independent families; these, together with their inability to defend themselves, on many such occasions, must have incited them to unite. Hence then was *society* formed on the grand principles of preservation and defence: and as these principles began to operate, in the different parts of the earth, where the different families had roamed, a great number of these *societies* began to be formed and established; which, taking to themselves particular names from particular occurrences, began to be perfectly distinct from one another.

As the individuals, of whom these societies were composed, had associated only for their defence, so they experienced, at first, no change in their condition. They were still independent and free; they were still without discipline or laws; they had every thing still in common; they pursued the same manner of life; wandering only, in *herds*, as the earth gave them or refused them sustenance, and doing, as a *public body*, what they had been accustomed to do as *individuals* before. This was the exact situation

tion of the Getæ and Scythians, of the † Lybiáns and Gœtulians, of the Italian Aborigines, and of the Huns and Alans. They had left thir original ſtate of *diſſociation*, and had ſtepped into that, which has been juſt deſcribed. Thus was the ſecond ſituation of men a ſtate of *independent ſociety*.

Having thus joined themſelves together, and having formed themſelves into ſeveral large and diſtinct bodies, they could not fail of ſubmitting ſoon to a more conſiderable change. Their numbers muſt have rapidly increaſed, and their ſocieties, in proceſs of time, have become ſo populous, as frequently to have experienced the want of ſubſiſtence, and many of the commotions and tumults of inteſtine ſtrife. For theſe inconveniencies however there were remedies to be found. *Agriculture* would furniſh them with that ſubſiſtence and ſupport, which the earth, from the rapid increaſe of its inhabitants, had become unable ſpon-

* Juſtin. L. 2. C. 2.
† Salluſt. Bell. Jug.
‡ Salluſt. Bell. Catil.
‖ Ammianus Marcellinus. L. 31. C. 2. et inſeq.

taneouſly

taneouſly to produce. An *aſſignation* of *property* would not only enforce an application, but excite an emulation, to labour; and *government* would at once afford a ſecurity to the acquiſitions of the induſtrious, and heal the inteſtine diſorders of the community, by the introduction of laws.

Such then were the remedies, that were gradually applied. The *ſocieties*, which had hitherto ſeen their members, undiſtinguiſhed either by authority or rank, admitted now of magiſtratical pre-eminence. They were divided into tribes; to every tribe was allotted a particular diſtrict for its ſupport, and to every individual his particular ſpot. *The Germans, who conſiſted of many and various nations, were exactly in this ſituation. They had advanced a ſtep beyond the Scythians, Gœtulians, and thoſe, whom we deſcribed before; and thus was the third ſituation of mankind a ſtate of *ſubordinate ſociety*.

*Agri pro Numero Cultorum ab univerſis per vices occupantur, quos mox inter ſe ſecundum dignationem partiuntur. Tacitus. C. 26. de Mor. Germ.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

As we have thus traced the ſituation of man from unbounded liberty to ſubordination, it will be proper to carry our inquiries farther, and to conſider who firſt obtained the pre-eminence in theſe *primæval ſocieties*, and by what particular methods it was obtained.

There were only two ways, by which ſuch an event could have been produced, by *compulſion* or *conſent*. When mankind firſt ſaw the neceſſity of government, it is probable that many had conceived the deſire of ruling. To be placed in a new ſituation, to be taken from the common herd, to be the firſt, diſtinguiſhed among men, were thoughts that muſt have had their charms. Let us ſuppoſe then, that theſe thoughts had worked ſo unuſually on the paſſions of any particular individual, as to have driven him to the extravagant deſign of obtaining the pre-eminence by force. How could his deſign have been accompliſhed? How could he forcibly have uſurped the juriſdiction at a time,

time, when, all being equally free, there was not a ſingle perſon, whoſe aſſiſtance he could command? Add to this, that, in a ſtate of univerſal liberty, force had been repaid by force, and the attempt had been fatal to the uſurper.

As *empire* then could never have been gained at firſt by *compulſion*, ſo it could only have been obtained by *conſent*; and as men were then going to make an important ſacrifice, for the ſake of their *mutual* happineſs, ſo he alone could have obtained it, (not whoſe *ambition* had greatly diſtinguiſhed him from the reſt) but in whoſe *wiſdom*, *juſtice*, *prudence*, and *virtue*, the whole community could confide.

To confirm this reaſoning, we ſhall appeal, as before, to facts; and ſhall conſult therefore the hiſtory of thoſe nations, which having juſt left their former ſtate of *independent ſociety*, were the very people that eſtabliſhed *ſubordination* and *government*.

The commentaries of Cæſar afford us the following accounts of the ancient Gauls. When any of their kings, either by death, or depoſition, made a vacancy in the regal office,

office, the whole nation was immediately convened for the appointment of a ſucceſſor. In theſe national conventions were the regal offices conferred. Every individual had a voice on the occaſion, and every individual was free. The perſon upon whom the general approbation appeared to fall, was immediately advanced to pre-eminence in the ſtate. He was uniformly one, whoſe actions had made him eminent; whoſe conduct had gained him previous applauſe; whoſe valour the very aſſembly, that elected him, had themſelves witneſſed in the field; whoſe prudence, wiſdom and juſtice, having rendered him ſignally ſerviceable, had endeared him to his tribe. For this reaſon, their kingdoms were not hereditary; the ſon did not always inherit the virtues of the ſire; and they were determined that he alone ſhould poſſeſs authority, in whoſe virtues they could confide. Nor was this all. So ſenſible were they of the important ſacrifice they had made; ſo extremely jealous even of the name of ſuperiority and power, that they limited, by a variety of laws, the authority of the very perſon whom they had

had juſt elected, from a confidence of his integrity; Ambiorix himſelf confeſſing, "that "his people had as much power over him, as "he could poſſibly have over his people."

The ſame cuſtom, as appears from Tacitus, prevailed alſo among the Germans. They had their national councils, like the Gauls; in which the regal and ducal offices were confirmed according to the majority of voices. They elected alſo, on theſe occaſions, thoſe only, whom their virtue, by repeated trial, had unequivocally diſtinguiſhed from the reſt; and they limited their authority ſo far, as neither to leave them the power of inflicting impriſonment or ſtripes, nor of exerciſing any penal juriſdiction. But as puniſhment was neceſſary in a ſtate of civil ſociety, "it was "permitted to the prieſts alone, that it might "appear to have been inflicted, by the order "of the gods, and not by any ſuperior au-"thority in man."

The accounts which we have thus given of the ancient Germans and Gauls, will be found alſo to be equally true of thoſe people, which had arrived at the ſame ſtate of

ſubordinate

ſubordinate ſociety. We might appeal, for a teſtimony of this, to the hiſtory of the Goths; to the hiſtory of the Franks and Saxons; to the hiſtory, in ſhort, of all thoſe nations, from which the different governments, now conſpicuous in Europe, have undeniably ſprung. And we might appeal, as a farther proof, to the Americans, who are repreſented by many of the moderns, from their own occular teſtimony, as obſerving the ſame cuſtoms at the preſent day.

It remains only to obſerve, that as theſe cuſtoms prevailed among the different nations deſcribed, in their early ſtate of ſubordinate ſociety, and as they were moreover the cuſtoms of their reſpective anceſtors, it appears that they muſt have been handed down, both by tradition and uſe, from the firſt introduction of *government*.

CHAP. III.

WE may now deduce thoſe general maxims concerning *ſubordination*, and *liberty*,

which we mentioned to have been eſſentially connected with the ſubject, and which ſome, from ſpeculation only, and without any alluſion to facts, have been bold enough to deny.

It appears firſt, that *liberty* is a *natural*, and *government* an *adventitious* right, becauſe all men were originally free.

It appears ſecondly, that government is a **contract*; becauſe, in theſe primœval ſubordinate

* The author has lately read a work, intitled Paley's Moral and Political Philoſophy, which, in this one reſpect, favours thoſe which have been hinted at, as it denies that government was a contract. "No ſocial compact was ever made in fact,"—"it "is to ſuppoſe it impoſſible to call ſavages out of caves and deſerts, "to deliberate upon topics, which the experience and ſtudies, "and the refinements of civil life alone ſuggeſt. Therefore no "government in the univerſe begun from this original." But there are no grounds for ſo abſurd a ſuppoſition; for government, and of courſe the ſocial compact, does not appear to have been introduced at the time, when families coming out of their caves and deſerts, or, in other words, quitting their former *diſſociated* ſtate, joined themſelves together. They had lived a conſiderable time in *ſociety*, like the Lybians and Gætulians before-mentioned, and had felt many of the diſadvantages of a want of diſcipline and laws, before government was introduced at all. The author of this Eſſay, before he took into conſideration the origin of government, was determined, in a matter of ſuch importance, to be biaſſed by no opinion whatever, and much leſs to indulge himſelf in

ordinate ſocieties, we have ſeen it voluntarily conferred on the one hand, and accepted on the other. We have ſeen it ſubject to various reſtrictions. We have ſeen its articles, which could then only be written by tradition and uſe, as perfect and binding as thoſe which are now committed to letters. We have ſeen it, in ſhort, partaking of the *fœderal* nature, as much as it could in a ſtate, which wanted the means of recording its tranſactions.

It appears, thirdly, that the grand object of the *contract*, is the *happineſs* of the peo-

in ſpeculation. He was determined ſolely to adhere to fact, and, by looking into the accounts left us of thoſe governments which were in their infancy, and, of courſe in the leaſt complicated ſtate, to attempt to diſcover their foundation: he cannot ſay therefore, that upon a very minute peruſal of the excellent work before quoted, he has been ſo far convinced, as to retract in the leaſt from his ſentiments on this head, and to give up maxims, which are drawn from hiſtorical facts, for thoſe, which are the reſult of ſpeculation. He may obſerve here, that whether government was a *contract* or not, it will not affect the reaſoning of the preſent Eſſay; ſince wherever the contract is afterwards mentioned, it is inferred only that its object was "the *happineſs of the people*," which is confeſſedly the end of government. Notwithſtanding this, he is under the neceſſity of inſerting this little note, though he almoſt feels himſelf ungrateful in contradicting a work which has afforded him ſo much entertainment.

ple; becauſe they gave the ſupremacy to him alone, who had been conſpicuous for the ſplendor of his abilities, or the integrity of his life: that the power of the multitude being directed by the *wiſdom* and *juſtice* of the prince, they might experience the moſt effectual protection from injury, the higheſt advantages of ſociety, the greateſt poſſible *happineſs*.

CHAP. IV.

HAVING now collected the materials that are neceſſary for the proſecution of our deſign, we ſhall immediately enter upon the diſcuſſion.

If any man had originally been endued with power, as with other faculties, ſo that the reſt of mankind had diſcovered in themſelves an *innate neceſſity* of obeying this particular perſon; it is evident that he and his deſcendants, from the ſuperiority of their nature, would have had a claim upon men for obedience, and a natural right to command: but as the right to empire is *adventitious*; as all were originally free; as

nature

nature made every man's body and mind *his own*; it is evident that no juſt man can be conſigned to *ſlavery*, without his own *conſent*.

Neither can men, by the ſame principles, be conſidered as lands, goods, or houſes, among *poſſeſſions*. It is neceſſary that all *property* ſhould be inferior to its *poſſeſſor*. But how does the *ſlave* differ from his *maſter*, but by *chance*? For though the mark, with which the latter is pleaſed to brand him, ſhews, at the firſt ſight, the difference of their *fortune*; what mark can be found in his *nature*, that can warrant a diſtinction?

To this conſideration we ſhall add the following, that if men can juſtly become the property of each other, their children, like the offſpring of cattle, muſt inherit their *paternal* lot. Now, as the actions of the father and the child muſt be thus at the ſole diſpoſal of their common maſter, it is evident, that the *authority* of the one, as a *parent*, and the *duty* of the other, as a *child*, muſt be inſtantly annihilated; rights and obligations, which, as they are founded in nature are implanted in our feelings, and

are

are eſtabliſhed by the voice of God, muſt contain in their annihilation a ſolid argument to prove, that there cannot be any *property* whatever in the *human ſpecies*.

We may conſider alſo, as a farther confirmation, that it is impoſſible, in the nature of things, that *liberty* can be *bought* or *ſold!* It is neither *ſaleable*, nor *purchaſable*. For if any one man can have an abſolute property in the liberty of another, or, in other words, if he, who is called a *maſter*, can have a *juſt* right to command the actions of him, who is called a *ſlave*, it is evident that the latter cannot be accountable for thoſe crimes which the former may order him to commit. Now as every reaſonable being is accountable for his actions, it is evident that ſuch a right cannot *juſtly* exiſt, and that human liberty, of courſe, is beyond the poſſibility either of *ſale* or *purchaſe*. Add to this, that, whenever you ſell the liberty of a man, you have the power only of alluding to the *body:* the *mind* cannot be confined or bound: it will be free, though its manſion be beſet with chains. But if, in every ſale of the *human ſpecies*, you are under the neceſſity of conſidering

ſidering your ſlave in this abſtracted light; of alluding only to the body, and of making no alluſion to the mind; you are under the neceſſity alſo of treating him, in the ſame moment, as a *brute*, and of abuſing therefore that nature, which cannot otherwiſe be conſidered than in the double capacity of *ſoul* and *body*.

But ſome perſon, perhaps, will make an objection to one of the former arguments. "If "men, from the *ſuperiority* of their nature, "cannot be conſidered, like lands, goods, or "houſes, among poſſeſſions, ſo neither can "cattle: for being endued with life, motion, "and ſenſibility, they are evidently *ſuperior* to "theſe." But this objection will receive its anſwer from thoſe obſervations which have been already made, and will diſcover the true reaſon why cattle are juſtly to be eſtimated as property. For firſt, the right to empire over brutes is *natural* and not *adventitious*, like the right to empire over men. There are, ſecondly, many and evident ſigns of the *inferiority* of their nature; and thirdly, their liberty can be bought and ſold, becauſe, being void of reaſon, they cannot be *accountable* for their actions.

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We might ſtop here for a conſiderable time, and deduce many valuable leſſons from the remarks that have been made, but that ſuch a circumſtance might be conſidered as a digreſſion. There is one, however, which, as it is ſo intimately connected with the ſubject, we cannot but deduce. We are taught to treat men in a different manner from brutes, becauſe they are ſo manifeſtly ſuperior in their nature; we are taught to treat brutes in a different manner from ſtones for the ſame reaſon; and thus, by giving to every created thing its due reſpect, to anſwer the views of Providence, which did not create a variety of natures without a purpoſe or deſign.

But if theſe things are ſo, how evidently againſt reaſon, nature, and every thing human and divine, muſt they act, who not only force men into *ſlavery* againſt their own *conſent*, but treat them altogether as *brutes*, and make the *natural liberty* of man an article of public commerce! and by what arguments can they poſſibly defend that commerce which cannot be carried on, in any ſingle inſtance, without a flagrant violation of the laws of nature and of God?

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

THAT we may the more accurately examine the arguments that are advanced on this occaſion, it will be proper to divide the *commerce* into two parts; firſt, as it relates to thoſe who *ſell*, and ſecondly, as it relates to thoſe who *purchaſe*, the *human ſpecies* into ſlavery. To the former part of which, having given every previous and neceſſary information in the hiſtory of ſervitude, we ſhall immediately proceed.

Let us inquire firſt, by what particular right the *liberties* of the harmleſs people are invaded by the *prince*. "By the *right of empire*," it will be anſwered, "becauſe he poſſeſſes domi-"nion and power by their own approbation "and conſent." But ſubjects, though under the dominion, are not the *property* of the prince. They cannot be conſidered as his *poſſeſſions*. Their *natures* are both the ſame; they are both born in the ſame manner; are ſubject to the ſame diſorders; muſt apply to the ſame remedies for a cure; are equally partakers of the grave:

grave: an *incidental* diſtinction accompanies them through life, and this —— is all.

We may add to this, that tho' the prince poſſeſſes dominion and power by the conſent and approbation of his ſubjects, he poſſeſſes it only for the moſt *ſalutary* ends. He may tyrannize, if he can: he may alter the *form* of his government: he cannot, however, alter its *nature* and *end*. Theſe will be immutably the ſame, though the whole ſyſtem of its adminiſtration ſhould be changed; and he will be ſtill bound to *defend* the lives and properties of his ſubjects, and to make them *happy*.

Does he defend thoſe, therefore, whom he invades at diſcretion with the ſword? Does he protect the property of thoſe, whoſe houſes and effects he conſigns at diſcretion to the flames? Does he make thoſe happy whom he ſeizes, as they are trying to eſcape the general devaſtation, and compels with their wives and families to a wretched *ſervitude*? He acts ſurely, as if the uſe of empire conſiſted in violence and oppreſſion; as if he, that was moſt exalted, ought, of neceſſity, to be moſt unjuſt. Here then the voice of *nature* and *juſtice* is againſt

againſt him. He breaks that law of *nature*, which ordains, " that no juſt man ſhall be " given into ſlavery againſt his own *conſent:*" he violates the firſt law of *juſtice*, as eſtabliſhed among men, " that no perſon ſhall do harm " to another without a previous and ſufficient " *provocation*;" and he violates alſo the ſacred condition of *empire* made with his anceſtors, and neceſſarily underſtood in every ſpecie sof government, " that the power of the multi- " tude being given up to the wiſdom and juſ- " tice of the prince, they may experience, in " return, the moſt effectual protection from " injury, the higheſt advantages of ſociety, the " greateſt poſſible *happineſs*."

But if kings then, to whom their own people have granted dominion and power, are unable to invade the liberties of their harmleſs ſubjects, without the higheſt *injuſtice*; how can thoſe private perſons be juſtified, who treacherouſly lie in wait for their fellow-creatures, and ſell them into ſlavery? What arguments can they poſſibly bring in their defence? What treaty of empire can they produce by which their innocent victims ever reſigned to them

them the leaſt portion of their *liberty*? In vain will they plead the *antiquity* of the cuſtom: in vain will the *honourable* light in which *piracy* was conſidered in the ages of barbariſm, afford them an excuſe. Impious and abandoned men! ye invade the liberties of thoſe who, (with reſpect to your impious ſelves) are in a ſtate of *nature*, in a ſtate of original *diſſociation*, perfectly *independent*, perfectly *free*.

It appears then that the two orders of ſlaves which have been mentioned in the hiſtory of the African ſervitude, "of thoſe who are pub-"licly ſeized by virtue of the authority of "their prince; and of thoſe who are private-"ly kidnapped by individuals," are collected by means of violence and oppreſſion; by means repugnant to *nature*, the principles of *government*, and the common notions of *equity*, as eſtabliſhed among men.

CHAP. VI.

WE come now to the third order of *involuntary* ſlaves, "to convicts." The only argument that the ſellers advance here, is this, "that

" that they have been found guilty of offences, " and that the puniſhment is juſt." But before the equity of the ſentence can be allowed, two queſtions muſt be decided, whether the puniſhment is *proportioned* to the offence, and what is its particular *object* and *end*?

To decide the firſt, we may previouſly obſerve that the African ſervitude comprehends *baniſhment*, a *deprivation* of *liberty*, and many *corporal* ſufferings.

On *baniſhment*, the following obſervations will ſuffice. Mankind have their *local* attachments. They have a particular regard for the ſpot in which they were born and nurtured. Here it was that they firſt drew their infant-breath: here, that they were cheriſhed and ſupported: here, that they paſſed thoſe ſcenes of childhood, which, free from care and anxiety, are the happieſt in the life of man; ſcenes which accompany them thro' life; which throw themſelves frequently into their thoughts, and produce the moſt agreeable ſenſations. Theſe then are weighty conſiderations; and how great this regard is may be evidenced from our own feelings; from the

the teſtimony of ſome who, when remote from their country, and in the hour of danger and diſtreſs, have found their thoughts unuſually directed by ſome impulſe or other to their native ſpot; and from the example of others who, having braved the ſtorms and adverſities of life, either repair to it for the remainder of their days, or deſire even to be conveyed to it, when exiſtence is no more.

But ſeparately from theſe their *local*, they have alſo their *perſonal* attachments; their regard for particular men. There are ties of blood; there are ties of friendſhip. In the former caſe, they muſt of neceſſity be attached: the conſtitution of their nature demands it. In the latter, it is impoſſible to be otherwiſe, ſince friendſhip is founded on an harmony of temper, on a concordance of ſentiments and manners, on habits of confidence, and a mutual exchange of favours.

We may now mention, as perfectly diſtinct both from their *local* and *perſonal*, the *national* attachments of mankind, their regard for the whole body of the people, among whom they were born and educated. This regard is particularly

ticularly conſpicuous in the conduct of ſuch as, being thus *nationally* connected, reſide in foreign parts. How anxiouſly do they meet together! how much do they enjoy the ſight of others of their countrymen whom fortune places in their way! what an eagerneſs do they ſhew to ſerve them, though not born on the ſame particular ſpot, not connected by conſanguinity or friendſhip, though unknown to them before! Neither is this affection wonderful, ſince they are creatures of the ſame education, of the ſame principles, of the ſame manners and habits; caſt as it were in the ſame mould, and marked with the ſame impreſſion.

If men therefore are thus ſeparately attached to the ſeveral objects deſcribed, it is evident that a ſeparate excluſion from either muſt afford them conſiderable pain. What then muſt be their ſufferings, to be forced for ever from their country, which includes them all? Which contains the *ſpot* in which they were born and nurtured; which contains their *relations* and *friends*; which contains the whole body of the *people* among whom they were bred

bred and educated. In theſe ſufferings, which ariſe to men, both in bidding and having bid adieu to all that they eſteem as dear and valuable, *baniſhment* conſiſts in part; and we may agree therefore with the ancients, without adding other melancholy circumſtances to the account, that it is no inconſiderable puniſhment of itſelf.

With reſpect to the *loſs* of *liberty*, which is the ſecond conſideration in the puniſhment, it is evident that men bear nothing worſe; that there is nothing that they lay more at heart; and that they have ſhewn, by many and memorable inſtances, that even death is to be preferred. How many could be named here who, having ſuffered the *loſs* of *liberty*, have put a period to their exiſtence! How many that have willingly undergone the hazard of their lives to deſtroy a tyrant! How many that have even gloried to periſh in the attempt! How many bloody and public wars have been undertaken (not to mention the numerous *ſervile* inſurrections with which hiſtory is ſtained) for the cauſe of *freedom!*

But

But if nothing is dearer than *liberty* to men, with which the barren rock is able to afford its joys, and without which the glorious ſun ſhines upon them but in vain, and all the ſweets and delicacies of life are taſteleſs and unenjoyed; what puniſhment can be more ſevere than the loſs of ſo great a bleſſing? But if to this *deprivation* of *liberty*, we add the agonizing pangs of *baniſhment*; and if, to the complicated ſtings of both, we add the inceſſant *ſtripes*, *wounds*, and *miſeries*, which are undergone by thoſe who are ſold into this horrid *ſervitude*, what crime can we poſſibly imagine to be ſo enormous as to be worthy of ſo great a puniſhment?

How contrary then to reaſon, juſtice, and nature, muſt thoſe act who apply this, the ſevereſt of human puniſhments, to the moſt inſignificant offence! yet ſuch is the cuſtom with the Africans: for from the time in which the Europeans firſt intoxicated the African princes with their foreign draughts, no crime has been committed, no ſhadow of a crime deviſed, that has not immediately been puniſhed with *ſervitude*.

But for what purpoſe is the puniſhment applied? Is it applied to amend the manners of the criminal, and thus render him a better ſubject? No, for if you baniſh him, he can no longer be a ſubject, and you can no longer therefore be ſolicitous for his morals. Add to this, that if you baniſh him to a place where he is to experience the hardſhips of want and hunger, (ſo powerfully does hunger compel men to the perpetration of crimes) you force him rather to corrupt than amend his manners, and to be wicked when he might otherwiſe be juſt.

Is it applied then, that others may be deterred from the ſame proceedings, and that crimes may become leſs frequent? No, but that *avarice* may be gratified; that the prince may experience the emoluments of the ſale: for, horrid and melancholy thought! the more crimes his ſubjects commit, the richer is he made; the more *abandoned* the ſubject, the *happier* is the prince!

Neither can we allow that the puniſhment thus applied, tends in any degree to anſwer

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the *public happineſs*; for if men can be ſentenced to ſlavery, right or wrong; if ſhadows can be turned into ſubſtances, and virtues into crimes; it is evident that none can be happy, becauſe none can be ſecure.

But if the puniſhment is infinitely greater than the offence, (which has been ſhewn before) and if it is inflicted, neither to amend the criminal, nor to deter others from the ſame proceedings; nor to advance, in any degree, the happineſs of the public, it is ſcarce neceſſary to obſerve that it is totally unjuſt, ſince it is repugnant to *reaſon*, the dictates of *nature*, and the very principles of *government*.

CHAP. VII.

WE come now to the fourth and laſt order of ſlaves, to *priſoners of war*. As the *ſellers* lay a particular ſtreſs on this order of men, and infer much, from its *antiquity*, in ſupport of the juſtice of their cauſe, we ſhall examine the principle on which it ſubſiſted among

among the ancients. But as this principle was the ſame among all nations, and as a citation from many of their hiſtories would not be leſs tedious than unneceſſary, we ſhall ſelect the example of the Romans for the conſideration of the caſe.

The law by which priſoners of war were ſaid to be ſentenced to ſervitude, was the * *law of nations*. It was ſo called from the univerſal concurrence of nations in the cuſtom. It had two points in view, the *perſons* of the *captured*, and their *effects*; both of which it immediately ſentenced, without any of the uſual forms of law, to be the property of the *captors*.

The principle on which the law was eſtabliſhed, was the *right of capture*. When any of the contending parties had overcome their opponents, and were about to deſtroy them, the right was conſidered to commence; a right which the victors conceived themſelves to have, to recal their ſwords, and, from the

* *Jure Gentium* ſervi noſtri ſunt, qui ab hoſtibus capiuntur. Juſtinian, L. 1. 5. 5. 1.

con-

conſideration of having ſaved the lives of the vanquiſhed, when they could have taken them by the laws of war, to commute *blood* for *ſervice*. Hence the Roman lawyer, Pomponius, deduces the etymology of *ſlave* in the Roman language. * "They were called *ſervi*, (ſays "he) from the following circumſtance. It "was uſual with our commanders to take "them priſoners, and ſell them: now this "circumſtance implies, that they muſt have "been previouſly *preſerved*, and hence the "name." Such then was the *right of capture*. It was a right which the cirumſtance of *taking* the vanquiſhed, that is, of *preſerving* them alive, gave the conquerors to their perſons. By this right, as always including the idea of a previous preſervation from death, † the vanquiſhed were ſaid *to be ſlaves*; and, "as all ſlaves, (ſays Juſtinian) are themſelves "in the power of others, and of courſe can "have nothing of their own, ſo their effects

* *Servorum* appellatio ex eo fluxit, quod imperatores noſtri captivos vendere, ac per hoc *ſervare*, nec occidere ſolent.

† Nam ſive victoribus *jure captivitatis* ſerviſſent, &c. Juſtin, L. 4. 3. et paſſim apud ſcriptores antiquos.

"fol-

" followed the condition of their perſons, and " became the property of the captors."

To examine this right by which the vanquiſhed were ſaid to be ſlaves, we ſhall uſe the words of a celebrated Roman author, and apply them to the preſent caſe. * " If it is " lawful, (ſays he) to deprive a man of his " life, it is certainly not inconſiſtent with na- " ture to rob him;" to rob him of his liberty. We admit the concluſion to be juſt, if the ſuppoſition be the ſame: we allow, if men have a right to commit that which is conſidered as a greater crime, that they have a right, at the ſame inſtant, to commit that which is conſidered as a leſs. But what ſhall we ſay to the *hypotheſis*? We deny it to be true. The voice of nature is againſt it. It is not lawful to kill, but on *neceſſity*. Had there been a neceſſity, where had the wretched captive ſurvived to be broken with chains and ſervitude? The very act of ſaving his life is an argument to prove that no ſuch neceſſity exiſted. The *concluſion* is therefore falſe. The

* Neque eſt contra naturam ſpoliare eum, ſi poſſis, quem honeſtum eſt necare. Cicero de officiis. L. 3. 6.

captors

captors had no right to the *lives* of the captured, and of courſe none to their *liberty:* they had no right to their *blood*, and of courſe none to their *ſervice*. Their right therefore had no foundation in juſtice. It was founded on a principle contrary to the law of nature, and of courſe contrary to that law which people, under different governments, are bound to obſerve to one another.

It is ſcarce neceſſary to obſerve, as a farther teſtimony of the injuſtice of the meaſure, that the Europeans, after the introduction of Chriſtianity, exploded this principle of the ancients, as frivolous and falſe; that they ſpared the lives of the vanquiſhed, not from the ſordid motives of *avarice*, but from a conſcientiouſneſs that homicide could only be juſtified by *neceſſity*; that they introduced an *exchange* of priſoners, and, by many and wiſe regulations, deprived war of many of its former horrors.

But the advocates for ſlavery, unable to defend themſelves againſt theſe arguments, have fled to other reſources, and, ignorant of hiſtory, have denied that the *right of capture*

was

was the true principle on which ſlavery ſubſiſted among the ancients. They reaſon thus: "The learned Grotius, and others, have conſidered ſlavery as the juſt conſequence of a private war, (ſuppoſing the war to be juſt and the opponents in a ſtate of nature), upon the principles of *reparation* and *puniſhment*. Now as the law of nature, which is the rule of conduct to individuals in ſuch a ſituation, is applicable to members of a different community, there is reaſon to preſume that theſe principles were applied by the ancients to their priſoners of war; that their *effects* were confiſcated by the right of *reparation*, and their *perſons* by the right of *puniſhment*."——

But ſuch a preſumption is falſe. The *right of capture* was the only argument that the ancients adduced in their defence. Hence Polybius: "What muſt they (the Mantinenſes) "ſuffer, to receive the puniſhment they de- "ſerve? Perhaps it will be ſaid, *that they "muſt be ſold, when they are taken, with their "wives and children, into ſlavery:* But this is "not to be conſidered as a puniſhment, ſince "even thoſe ſuffer it, by the laws of war, "who

"who have done nothing that is baſe." The truth is, that both the *offending* and the *offended* parties, whenever they were victorious, inflicted ſlavery alike. But if the *offending* party inflicted ſlavery on the perſons of the vanquiſhed, by what right did they inflict it? It muſt be anſwered from the preſumption before-mentioned, "by the right of *repara-* "*tion*, or of *puniſhment*:" an anſwer plainly abſurd and contradictory, as it ſuppoſes the *aggreſſor* to have a *right*, which the *injured* only could poſſeſs.

Neither is the argument leſs fallacious than the preſumption, in applying theſe principles, which in a *public* war could belong to the *public* only, to the perſons of the *individuals* that were taken. This calls us again to the hiſtory of the ancients, and, as the rights of reparation and puniſhment could extend to thoſe only, who had been injured, to ſelect a particular inſtance for the conſideration of the caſe.

As the Romans had been injured without a previous provocation, by the conduct of Hannibal at Saguntum, we may take the treaty into conſideration which they made with the Car-

Carthaginians, when the latter, defeated at Zama, ſued for peace. It conſiſted of three articles. * By the firſt, the Carthaginians were to be free, and to enjoy their conſtitution and laws. By the ſecond, they were to pay a conſiderable ſum of money, as a reparation for the damages and expence of war: and, by the third, they were to deliver up their elephants and ſhips of war, and to be ſubject to various reſtrictions, as a puniſhment. With theſe terms they complied, and the war was finiſhed.

Thus then did the Romans make that diſtinction between *private* and *public* war, which was neceſſary to be made, and which the argument is fallacious in not ſuppoſing. The *treaſury* of the vanquiſhed was marked as the means of *reparation*; and as this treaſury was ſupplied, in a great meaſure, by the impo-

* 1. Ut liberi ſuis legibus viverent. Livy, L. 30. 37.

2. Decem millia talentûm argenti deſcripta penſionibus æquis in annos quinquaginta ſolverent. Ibid.

3. Et naves roſtratas, præter decem triremes, traderent, elephantoſque, quos haberent domitos; neque domarent alios: Bellum neve in Africa, neve extra Africam, injuſſu P. R. gererent, &c. Ibid.

ſition

ſition of taxes, and was, wholly, the property of the *public*, ſo the *public* made the reparation that was due. The *elephants* alſo, and *ſhips of war*, which were marked as the means of *puniſhment*, were *public* property; and as they were conſiderable inſtruments of ſecurity and defence to their poſſeſſors, and of annoyance to an enemy, ſo their loſs, added to the reſtrictions of the treaty, operated as a great and *public* puniſhment. But with reſpect to the Carthaginian priſoners, who had been taken in the war, they were retained in *ſervitude*: not upon the principles of *reparation* and *puniſhment*, becauſe the Romans had already received, by their own confeſſion in the treaty, a ſufficient ſatisfaction: not upon theſe principles, becauſe they were inapplicable to *individuals*: the legionary ſoldier in the ſervice of the injured, who took his priſoner, was not the perſon to whom the *injury had been done*, any more than the ſoldier in the ſervice of the aggreſſors, who was taken, was the perſon who had *committed the offence*: but they were retained in ſervitude by the *right of capture*; becauſe, when both parties had ſent their military into

into the field to determine the diſpute, it was at the *private* choice of the legionary ſoldier before-mentioned, whether he would ſpare the life of his conquered opponent, when he was thought to be entitled to take it, if he had choſen, by the laws of war.

To produce more inſtances, as an illuſtration of the ſubject, or to go farther into the argument, would be to treſpaſs upon the patience, as well as underſtanding of the reader. In *a ſtate of nature*, where a man is ſuppoſed to commit an injury, and to be unconnected with the reſt of the world, the act is *private*, and the right, which the injured acquires, can extend only to *himſelf:* but in *a ſtate of ſociety*, where any member or members of a particular community give offence to thoſe of another, and they are patronized by the ſtate to which they belong, the caſe is altered; the act becomes immediately *publick*, and the *public* alone are to experience the conſequences of their injuſtice. For as no particular member of the community, if conſidered as an individual, is guilty, except the perſon by whom the injury was done,

it

it would be contrary to reaſon and juſtice, to apply the principles of *reparation* and *puniſhment*, which belong to the people as a collective body, to any individual of the community, who ſhould happen to be taken. Now, as the principles of *reparation* and *puniſhment* are thus inapplicable to the priſoners, taken in a *publick* war, and as the *right of capture*, as we have ſhewn before, is inſufficient to intitle the victors to the *ſervice* of the vanquiſhed, it is evident that *ſlavery* cannot juſtly exiſt at all, ſince there are no other maxims, on which it can be founded, even in the moſt equitable wars.

But if theſe things are ſo; if ſlavery cannot be defended even in the moſt *equitable* wars, what arguments will not be found againſt that ſervitude, which ariſes from thoſe that are *unjuſt?* Which ariſes from thoſe African wars, that relate to the preſent ſubject? The African princes, corrupted by the merchants of Europe, ſeek every opportunity of quarrelling with one another. Every ſpark is blown into a flame; and war is undertaken from no other conſideration, than that *of procuring ſlaves:* while the Europeans,

ropeans, on the other hand, happy in the quarrels which they have thus excited, ſupply them with arms and ammunition for the accompliſhment of their horrid purpoſe. Thus has Africa, for the ſpace of two hundred years, been the ſcene of the moſt iniquitous and bloody wars; and thus have many thouſands of men, in the moſt iniquitous manner, been ſent into ſervitude.

CHAP. VIII.

WE ſhall beg leave, before we proceed to the arguments of the *purchaſers*, to add the following obſervations to the ſubſtance of the three preceding chapters.

As the two orders of men, of thoſe who are privately kidnapped by individuals, and of thoſe who are publicly ſeized by virtue of the authority of their prince, compoſe together, at leaſt, * nine tenths of the African ſlaves,

* The total annual exportation from Africa, is eſtimated here at 100,000 men, two thirds of whom are exported by the Britiſh merchants alone. This eſtimate is leſs than that which is uſually made

ſlaves, they cannot contain, upon a moderate computation, leſs than ninety thouſand men annually tranſported: an immenſe number, but eaſily to be credited, when we reflect that thouſands are employed for the purpoſe of ſtealing the unwary, and that theſe diabolical practices are in force, ſo far has European

made, and has been publiſhed. The author has been informed by diſintereſted people, who were in moſt of the Weſt India iſlands during the late war, and who converſed with many of the moſt intelligent of the negroes, for the purpoſe of inquiring by what methods they had originally been reduced to ſlavery, that they did not find even two in twenty, who had been reduced to that ſituation, by any other means than thoſe mentioned above. The author, deſirous of a farther confirmation of this circumſtance, ſtopped the preſs till he had written to another friend, who had reſided twenty years in the Weſt-Indies, and whoſe opinion he had not yet aſked. The following is an extract from the anſwer: "I "do not, among many hundreds, recollect to have ſeen but one or "two ſlaves, of thoſe imported from Africa, who had any ſcars "to ſhew, that they had been in war. They are generally ſuch as "are kidnapped, or ſold by their tyrants, after the deſtruction of a "village. In ſhort, I am firmly of opinion, that crimes and war "together do not furniſh one ſlave in an hundred of the numbers "introduced into the European colonies. Of conſequence the "trade itſelf, were it poſſible to ſuppoſe convicts or priſoners of "war to be juſtly ſentenced to ſervitude, is accountable for ninety-"nine in every hundred ſlaves, whom it ſupplies. It is an inſult "to the public, to attempt to palliate the method of procuring "them."

injuſtice

injuſtice been ſpread, at the diſtance of a thouſand miles from the factories on the coaſt. The *ſlave merchants*, among whom a quantity of European goods is previouſly divided, travel into the heart of the country to this amazing diſtance. Some of them attend the various markets, that are eſtabliſhed through ſo large an extent of territory, to purchaſe the kidnapped people, whom the *ſlave-hunters* are continually bringing in; while the reſt, ſubdividing their merchandize among the petty ſovereigns with whom they deal, receive, by an immediate exertion of fraud and violence, the ſtipulated number.

Now, will any man aſſert, in oppoſition to the arguments before advanced, that out of this immenſe body of men, thus annually collected and tranſported, there is even *one*, over whom the original or ſubſequent ſeller can have any power or right? Whoever aſſerts this, in the firſt inſtance, muſt contradict his own feelings, and muſt conſider *himſelf* as a juſt object of prey, whenever any daring invader ſhall think it proper to attack *him*. And, in the ſecond inſtance, the very

very idea which the African princes entertain of their villages, as *parks* or *reſervoirs*, ſtocked only for their own convenience, and of their ſubjects, as *wild beaſts* whom they may purſue and take at pleaſure, is ſo ſhocking, that it need only be mentioned, to be inſtantly reprobated by the reader.

The order of ſlaves, which is next to the former in reſpect to the number of people whom it contains, is that of priſoners of war. This order, if the former ſtatement be true, is more inconſiderable than is generally imagined; but whoever reflects on the prodigious ſlaughter that is conſtantly made in every African ſkirmiſh, cannot be otherwiſe than of this opinion: he will find, that where *ten* are taken, he has every reaſon to preſume that an *hundred* periſh. In ſome of theſe ſkirmiſhes, though they have been begun for the expreſs purpoſe of *procuring ſlaves*, the conquerors have ſuffered but few of the vanquiſhed to eſcape the fury of the ſword; and there have not been wanting inſtances, where they have been ſo incenſed at the reſiſtance they have found, that their ſpirit of vengeance has en-

tirely got the better of their avarice, and they have murdered, in cool blood, every individual, without diſcrimination, either of age or ſex.

*The following is an account of one of theſe ſkirmiſhes, as deſcribed by a perſon, who was witneſs to the ſcene. "I was ſent "with ſeveral others, in a ſmall ſloop, up the "river Niger, to purchaſe ſlaves: we had "ſome free negroes with us in the practice; "and as the veſſels are liable to frequent at-"tacks from the negroes on one ſide of the ri-"ver, or the Moors on the other, they are all "armed. As we rode at anchor a long way "up the river, we obſerved a large number of "negroes in huts by the river's ſide, and for

*. The writer of the letter of which this is a faithful extract, and who was known to the author of the preſent Eſſay, was a long time on the African coaſt. He had once the misfortune to be ſhipwrecked there, and to be taken by the natives, who conveyed him and his companions a conſiderable way up into the country. The hardſhips which he underwent in the march, his treatment during his captivity, the ſcenes to which he was witneſs, while he reſided among the inland Africans, as well as while in the African trade, gave occaſion to a ſeries of very intereſting letters. Theſe letters were ſent to the author of the preſent Eſſay, with liberty to make what uſe of them he choſe, by the gentleman to whom they were written.

"our

" our own ſafety kept a wary eye on them.
" Early next morning we ſaw from our maſt-
" head a numerous body approaching, with
" apparently but little order, but in cloſe ar-
" ray. They approached very faſt, and fell
" furiouſly on the inhabitants of the town,
" who ſeemed to be quite *ſurprized*, but ne-
" vertheleſs, as ſoon as they could get toge-
" ther, fought ſtoutly. They had ſome fire-
" arms, but made very little uſe of them, as
" they came directly to cloſe fighting with
" their ſpears, lances, and ſabres. Many of
" the invaders were mounted on ſmall horſes;
" and both parties fought for about half an hour
" with the fierceſt animoſity, exerting much
" more courage and perſeverance than I had
" ever before been witneſs to amongſt them.
" The women and children of the town
" cluſtered together to the water's edge,
" running ſhrieking up and down with ter-
" ror, waiting the event of the combat,
" till their party gave way and took to the
" water, to endeavour to ſwim over to the
" Barbary ſide. They were cloſely purſued
" even into the river by the victors, who,

" though they came for the purpoſe of *getting*
" *ſlaves*, gave no quarter, *their cruelty even pre-*
" *vailing over their avarice.* They made no
" priſoners, but put all to the ſword without
" mercy. Horrible indeed was the carnage
" of the vanquiſhed on this occaſion, and as
" we were within two or three hundred yards
" of them, their cries and ſhrieks affected us
" extremely. We had got up our anchor at
" the beginning of the fray, and now ſtood
" cloſe in to the ſpot, where the victors hav-
" ing followed the vanquiſhed into the water,
" were continually dragging out and murder-
" ing thoſe, whom by reaſon of their wounds
" they eaſily overtook. The very children,
" whom they took in great numbers, did not
" eſcape the maſſacre. Enraged at their bar-
" barity, we fired our guns loaden with grape
" ſhot, and a volley of ſmall arms among
" them, which effectually checked their ar-
" dour, and obliged them to retire to a diſtance
" from the ſhore; from whence a few round
" cannon ſhot ſoon removed them into the
" woods. The whole river was black over
" with the heads of the fugitives, who were

" ſwim-

"ſwimming for their lives. Theſe poor wretch-
"es, fearing *us* as much as their conquerors,
"dived when we fired, and cried moſt lamen-
"tably for mercy. Having now effectually
"favoured their retreat, we ſtood backwards
"and forwards, and took up ſeveral that
"were wounded and tired. All whoſe
"wounds had diſabled them from ſwimming,
"were either butchered or drowned, before
"we got up to them. With a juſtice and ge-
"neroſity, *never I believe before heard of*
"*among ſlavers*, we gave thoſe their liberty
"whom we had taken up, ſetting them on
"ſhore on the Barbary ſide, among the poor
"reſidue of their companions, who had ſur-
"vived the ſlaughter of the morning."

We ſhall make but two remarks on this horrid inſtance of African cruelty. It adds, firſt, a conſiderable weight to the ſtatements that have been made; and confirms, ſecondly, the concluſions that were drawn in the preceding chapter. For if we even allow the right of capture to be juſt, and the principles of reparation and puniſhment to be applicable to the individuals of a community,

munity, yet would the former be unjuſt, and the latter inapplicable, in the preſent caſe. Every African war is a robbery; and we may add, to our former expreſſion, when we ſaid, "that thus have many thouſands of men, in "the moſt iniquitous manner, been ſent in-"to ſervitude," that we believe there are few of this order, who are not as much the examples of injuſtice, as the people that have been kidnapped; and who do not additionally convey, when we conſider them as priſoners of war, an idea of the moſt complicated ſcene of murder.

The order of *convicts*, as it exiſts almoſt ſolely among thoſe princes whoſe dominions are contiguous to the European factories, is from this circumſtance ſo inconſiderable, when compared with either of the preceding, that we ſhould not have mentioned it again, but that we were unwilling to omit any additional argument that occurred againſt it.

It has been ſhewn already, that the puniſhment of ſlavery is inflicted from no other motive, than that of gratifying the *avarice* of the

the prince, a conſideration ſo deteſtable as to be ſufficient of itſelf to prove it to be unjuſt; and that it is ſo diſproportionate, from its *nature*, to the offence, as to afford an additional proof of its injuſtice. We ſhall add now, as a ſecond argument, its diſproportion from its *continuance:* and we ſhall derive a third from the conſideration that, in civil ſociety, every violation of the laws of the community is an offence againſt the *ſtate.**

Let us ſuppoſe then an African prince, diſdaining for once the idea of emolument: let us ſuppoſe him for once inflamed with the love of his country, and reſolving to puniſh from this principle alone, "that by exhibit-"ing an example of terror, he may preſerve "that *happineſs of the public*, which he is "bound to ſecure and defend by the very

* Were this not the caſe, the government of a country could have no right to take cognizance of crimes, and puniſh them, but every individual, if injured, would have a right to puniſh the aggreſſor with his own hand, which is contrary to the notions of all civilized men, whether among the ancients or the moderns.

"nature

" nature of his contract; or, in other words, " that he may anſwer the end of govern- " ment." If actuated then by this principle, he ſhould adjudge ſlavery to an offender, as a juſt puniſhment for his offence, for whoſe benefit muſt the convict labour? If it be anſwered, " for the benefit of the ſtate," we allow that the puniſhment, in whatever light it is conſidered, will be found to be equitable: but if it be anſwered, " for the benefit " of any *individual whom he pleaſes to appoint*," we deny it to be juſt. The * ſtate alone is conſidered to have been injured, and as *injuries cannot poſſibly be transferred*, the ſtate alone can juſtly receive the advantages of his labour. But if the African prince, when he thus condemns him to labour for the benefit of an *unoffended individual*, ſhould at the ſame time ſentence him to become his *property*; that is, if he ſhould make the perſon and

* This ſame notion is entertained even by the African princes, who do not permit the perſon injured to revenge his injury, or to receive the convict as a ſlave. But if the very perſon who has been *injured* does not poſſeſs him, much leſs ought any other perſon whatſoever.

life

life of the convict at the abſolute diſpoſal of him, for whom he has ſentenced him to labour; it is evident that, in addition to his former injuſtice, he is uſurping a power which no ruler or rulers of a ſtate can poſſeſs, and which the great Creator of the univerſe never yet gave to any order whatever of created beings.

That this reaſoning is true, and that civilized nations have conſidered it as ſuch, will be beſt teſtified by their practice. We may appeal here to that *ſlavery*, which is now adjudged to delinquents, as a puniſhment among many of the ſtates of Europe. Theſe delinquents are ſentenced to labour at the *oar*, to work in *mines* and on *fortifications*, to cut and clear *rivers*, to make and repair *roads*, and to perform other works of national utility. They are employed, in ſhort, in the *public* work; becauſe, as the crimes they have committed are conſidered to have been crimes againſt the public, no individual can juſtly receive the emoluments of their labour; and they are neither *ſold*, nor made capable of being

being *transferred*, becauſe no government whatſoever is inveſted with ſuch a power.

Thus then may that ſlavery, in which only the idea of *labour* is included, be perfectly equitable, and the delinquent will always receive his puniſhment as a *man*; whereas in that, which additionally includes the idea of *property*, and to undergo which the delinquent muſt previouſly change his nature, and become a *brute*; there is an inconſiſtency which no arguments can reconcile, and a contradiction to every principle of nature, which a man need only to appeal to his own feelings immediately to evince. And we will venture to aſſert, from the united obſervations that have been made upon the ſubject, in oppoſition to any arguments that may be advanced, that there is ſcarcely one of thoſe who are called African convicts, on whom the prince has a right to inflict a puniſhment at all; and that there is no one whatever whom he has a power of ſentencing to labour for the benefit of an unoffended individual, and much leſs whom he has a right to ſell.

Having

* Having now fully examined the arguments of the *ſellers*, and having made ſuch additional remarks as were neceſſary, we have only to add, that we cannot ſufficiently expreſs our deteſtation at their conduct. Were the reader coolly to reflect upon the caſe of but *one* of the unfortunate men, who are annually the victims of *avarice*, and conſider his ſituation in life, as a father, an huſband, or a friend, we are ſure that even on ſuch a partial reflection he muſt experience conſiderable pain. What then muſt be his feelings when he is told, that, ſince the ſlave-trade began, † *nine millions* of men have been torn from their deareſt connections, and ſold into ſlavery. If at this recital his indignation ſhould ariſe, let him conſider it as the genuine production of nature; that ſhe recoiled at the horrid thought, and that ſhe applied inſtantly a torch

* There are inſtances on the African continent of *parents* ſelling their *children*. As the ſlaves of this deſcription are ſo few, and are ſo irregularly obtained, we did not think it worth our while to conſider them as forming an order; and, as God never gave the parent a power over his child to make him *miſerable*, we truſt that any further mention of them will be unneceſſary.

† Abbè Raynal, Hiſt. Phil. vol. 4. p. 154.

to his breaſt to kindle his reſentment; and if, during his indignation, ſhe ſhould awaken the ſigh of ſympathy, or ſeduce the tear of commiſeration from his eye, let him conſider each as an additional argument againſt the iniquity of the *ſellers*.

CHAP. IX.

IT remains only now to examine by what arguments thoſe, who *receive* or *purchaſe* their fellow-creatures into ſlavery, defend the *commerce*. Their firſt plea is, "that they receive "thoſe with propriety, who are convicted of "crimes, becauſe they are delivered into their "hands by *their own magiſtrates*." But what is this to you *receivers*? Have the unfortunate *convicts* been guilty of injury to *you*? Have they broken *your* treaties? Have they plundered *your* ſhips? Have they carried *your* wives and children into ſlavery, that *you* ſhould thus retaliate? Have they offended *you* even by word or geſture?

But

But if the African convicts are innocent with reſpect to you; if you have not even the ſhadow of a claim upon their perſons; by what right do you receive them? "By "the laws of the Africans," you will ſay; "by which it is poſitively allowed."—But can *laws* alter the nature of vice? They may give it a ſanction perhaps: it will ſtill be immutably the ſame, and though dreſſed in the outward habiliments of *honour*, will ſtill be *intrinſically baſe.*

But alas! you do not only attempt to defend yourſelves by theſe arguments, but even dare to give your actions the appearance of lenity, and aſſume *merit* from your *baſeneſs!* and how firſt ought you particularly to bluſh, when you aſſert, "that priſo-"ners of war are only purchaſed from the "hands of their conquerors, *to deliver them* "*from death.*" Ridiculous defence! can the moſt credulous believe it? You entice the Africans to war; you foment their quarrels; you ſupply them with arms and ammunition, and all—from the *motives of benevolence.* Does a man ſet fire to an houſe,

for

for the purpoſe of reſcuing the inhabitants from the flames? But if they are only purchaſed, to *deliver them from death*; why, when they are delivered into your hands, as protectors, do you torture them with hunger? Why do you kill them with fatigue? Why does the whip deform their bodies, or the knife their limbs? Why do you ſentence them to death? to a death, infinitely more excruciating than that from which you ſo kindly ſaved them? What anſwer do you make to this? for if you had not humanely preſerved them from the hands of their conquerors, a quick death perhaps, and that in the ſpace of a moment, had freed them from their pain: but on account of your *favour* and *benevolence*, it is known that they have lingered years in pain and agony, and have been ſentenced, at laſt, to a dreadful death for the moſt inſignificant offence.

Neither can we allow the other argument to be true, on which you found your merit; "that you take them from their country "for their own convenience; becauſe Af-"rica, ſcorched with inceſſant heat, and "ſub-

"ſubject to the moſt violent rains and tem-
"peſts, is unwholeſome, and unfit to be inha-
"bited." Prepoſterous men! do you thus judge from your own feelings? Do you thus judge from your own conſtitution and frame? But if you ſuppoſe that the Africans are incapable of enduring their own climate, becauſe you cannot endure it yourſelves, why do you receive them into ſlavery? Why do you not meaſure them here by the ſame ſtandard? For if you are unable to bear hunger and thirſt, chains and impriſonment, wounds and torture, why do you not ſuppoſe them incapable of enduring the ſame treatment? Thus then is your argument turned againſt yourſelves. But conſider the anſwer which the Scythians gave the Ægyptians, when they contended about the antiquity of their original, * "That na-
"ture, when ſhe firſt diſtinguiſhed countries
"by different degrees of heat and cold, temper-
"ed the bodies of animals, at the ſame in-
"ſtant, to endure the different ſituations:
"that as the climate of Scythia was ſeverer
"than that of Ægypt, ſo were the bodies

* Juſtin, L. 2. C. 1.

"of

" of the Scythians harder, and as capable of " enduring the ſeverity of their atmoſphere, " as the Ægyptians the temperateneſs of their " own."

But you may ſay perhaps, that, though they are capable of enduring their own climate, yet their ſituation is frequently uncomfortable, and even wretched: that Africa is infeſted with locuſts, and inſects of various kinds; that they ſettle in ſwarms upon the trees, deſtroy the verdure, conſume the fruit, and deprive the inhabitants of their food. But the ſame anſwer may be applied as before; " that the ſame kind Providence, who tempered the body of the animal, tempered alſo the body of the tree; that he gave it a quality to recover the bite of the locuſt, which he ſent; and to reaſſume, in a ſhort interval of time, its former glory." And that ſuch is the caſe experience has ſhewn: for the very trees that have been infeſted, and ſtripped of their bloom and verdure, ſo ſurprizingly quick is vegetation, appear in a few days, as if an inſect had been utterly unknown.

We

We may add to theſe obſervations, from the teſtimony of thoſe who have written the Hiſtory of Africa from their own inſpection, that no country is more luxurious in proſpects, none more fruitful, none more rich in herds and flocks, and none, where the comforts of life can be gained with ſo little trouble.

But you ſay again, as a confirmation of theſe your former arguments, (by which you would have it underſtood, that the Africans themſelves are ſenſible of the goodneſs of your intentions) "that they do not appear to go with "you againſt their will." Impudent and baſe aſſertion! Why then do you load them with chains? Why keep you your daily and nightly watches? But alas, as a farther, though a more melancholy proof of the falſhood of your aſſertions, how many, when on board your ſhips, have put a period to their exiſtence? How many have leaped into the ſea? How many have pined to death, that, even at the expence of their lives, they might fly from your *benevolence?*

Do you call them obſtinate then, becauſe they refuſe your favours? Do you call them

ungrateful, becauſe they make you this return? How much rather ought you receivers to bluſh? How much rather ought you receivers to be conſidered as abandoned and execrable; who, when you uſurp the dominion over thoſe who are as free and independent as yourſelves, break the firſt law of juſtice, which ordains, "that no perſon ſhall do harm to another, "without a previous provocation;" who offend againſt the dictates of nature, which commands, "that no juſt man ſhall be given or "received into ſlavery againſt his own con-"ſent;" and who violate the very laws of the empire that you aſſume, by conſigning your ſubjects to miſery.

Now, as a famous Heathen philoſopher obſerves, from whoſe mouth you ſhall be convicted, * "there is a conſiderable difference, "whether an injury is done, during any per-"turbation of mind, which is generally ſhort "and momentary; or whether it is done with "any previous meditation and deſign; for, "thoſe crimes, which proceed from any ſud-

* Cicero de Officiis. L. 1. C. 8.

"den

" den commotion of the mind, are leſs than " thoſe which are ſtudied and prepared," how great and enormous are your crimes to be conſidered, who plan your African voyages at a time, when your reaſon is ſound, and your ſenſes are awake; who coolly and deliberately equip your veſſels; and who ſpend years, and even lives, in the traffic of *human liberty*.

But if the arguments of thoſe, who *ſell* or *deliver* men into ſlavery, (as we have ſhewn before) and of thoſe, who *receive* or *purchaſe* them, (as we have now ſhewn) are wholly falſe, it is evident that this *commerce* is not only beyond the poſſibility of defence, but is juſtly to be accounted wicked, and juſtly impious, ſince it is contrary to the principles of *law* and *government*, the *dictates* of *reaſon*, the common maxims of *equity*, the laws of *nature*, the admonitions of *conſcience*, and, in ſhort, the whole doctrine of *natural religion*.

PART III.

THE SLAVERY OF THE AFRICANS IN THE EUROPEAN COLONIES.

CHAP. I.

HAVING confined ourſelves wholly, in the ſecond part of this Eſſay, to the conſideration of the *commerce*, we ſhall now proceed to the conſideration of the *ſlavery* that is founded upon it. As this ſlavery will be conſpicuous in the *treatment*, which the unfortunate Africans uniformly undergo, when they are put into the hands of the *receivers*, we ſhall deſcribe the manner in which they are accuſtomed to be uſed from this period.

To

To place this in the cleareſt and moſt conſpicuous point of view, we ſhall throw a conſiderable part of our information on this head into the form of a narrative: we ſhall ſuppoſe ourſelves, in ſhort, on the continent of Africa, and relate a ſcene, which, from its agreement with unqueſtionable facts, might not unreaſonably be preſumed to have been preſented to our view, had we been really there.

And firſt, let us turn our eyes to the cloud of duſt that is before us. It ſeems to advance rapidly, and accompanied with diſmal ſhrieks and yellings, to make the very air that is above it tremble as it rolls along. What can poſſibly be the cauſe? Let us enquire of that melancholy African, who ſeems to walk dejected near the ſhore: whoſe eyes are ſtedfaſtly fixed on the approaching object, and whoſe heart, if we can judge from the appearance of his countenance, muſt be greatly agitated.

"Alas!" ſays the unhappy African, "the "cloud that you ſee approaching, is a train of "wretched ſlaves. They are going to the ſhips "behind you. They are deſtined for the Eng-"liſh colonies, and if you will ſtay here but

"for

" for a little time, you will ſee them paſs. " They were laſt night drawn up upon the " plain which you ſee before you, where they " were branded upon the breaſt with an *hot* " *iron*; and when they had undergone the " whole of the treatment which is cuſtomary " on theſe occaſions, and which I am informed " that you Engliſhmen at home uſe to the *cat-* " *tle* which you buy, they were returned to " their priſon. As I have ſome dealings with " the members of the factory which you ſee " at a little diſtance, (though thanks to the " Great Spirit, I never dealt in the *liberty* of " my fellow creatures) I gained admittance " there. I learned the hiſtory of ſome of the " unfortunate people whom I ſaw confined, " and will explain to you, if my eye ſhould " catch them as they paſs, the real cauſes of " their ſervitude."

Scarcely were theſe words ſpoken, when they came diſtinctly into ſight. They appeared to advance in a long column, but in a very irregular manner. There were three only in the front, and theſe were chained together. The reſt that followed ſeemed to be chained by

by pairs, but by preſſing forward to avoid the laſh of the drivers, the breadth of the column began to be greatly extended, and ten or more were obſerved abreaſt.

While we were making theſe remarks, the intelligent African thus reſumed his diſcourſe. "The firſt three whom you obſerve, at the "head of the train, to be chained together, "are priſoners of war. As ſoon as the ſhips "that are behind you arrived, the news was "diſpatched into the inland country; when "one of the petty kings immediately aſſem-"bled his ſubjects, and attacked a neighbour-"ing tribe. The wretched people, though "they were ſurprized, made a formidable re-"ſiſtance, as they reſolved, almoſt all of them, "rather to loſe their lives than ſurvive their "liberty. The perſon whom you ſee in the "middle, is the father of the two young men "who are chained to him on each ſide. His "wife and two of his children were killed in "the attack, and his father being wounded, "and, on account of his age, *incapable of ſer-"vitude*, was left bleeding on the ſpot where "this tranſaction happened."

"With

" With reſpect to thoſe who are now paſ-
" ſing us, and are immediately behind the for-
" mer, I can give you no other intelligence,
" than that ſome of them, to about the number
" of thirty, were taken in the ſame ſkirmiſh.
" Their tribe was ſaid to have been numerous
" before the attack; theſe however are *all that*
" *are left alive*. But with reſpect to the un-
" happy man, who is now oppoſite to us, and
" whom you may diſtinguiſh, as he is now
" looking back and wringing his hands in
" deſpair, I can inform you with more preci-
" ſion. He is an unfortunate convict. He
" lived only about five days journey from the
" factory. He went out with his king to
" hunt, and was one of his train; but,
" through too great an anxiety to afford his
" royal maſter diverſion, he rouſed the game
" from the covert rather ſooner than was ex-
" pected. The king, exaſperated at this cir-
" cumſtance, immediately ſentenced him to
" ſlavery. His wife and children, fearing leſt
" the tyrant ſhould extend the puniſhment to
" themſelves, *which is not unuſual*, fled directly
" to the woods, where they were all devoured."

" The

"The people, whom you ſee cloſe behind "the unhappy convict, form a numerous bo- "dy, and reach a conſiderable way. They "ſpeak a language, which no perſon in this "part of Africa can underſtand, and their fea- "tures, as you perceive, are ſo different from "thoſe of the reſt, that they almoſt appear a "diſtinct race of men. From this circumſtance "I recollect them. They are the ſubjects of "a very diſtant prince, who agreed with the "*ſlave merchants for a quantity of ſpirituous li-* "*quors*, to furniſh him with a ſtipulated num- "ber of ſlaves. He accordingly ſurrounded, "and ſet fire to one of his own villages in the "night, and ſeized theſe people, who were "unfortunately the inhabitants, as they were "eſcaping from the flames. I firſt ſaw them "as the merchants were driving them in, "about two days ago. They came in a large "body, and were tied together at the neck "with leather thongs, which permitted them "to walk at the diſtance of about a yard from "one another. Many of them were loaden "with elephants teeth, which had been pur- "chaſed at the ſame time. All of them had

"bags,

" bags, made of ſkin, upon their ſhoulders;
" for as they were to travel, in their way from
" the great mountains, through barren ſands
" and inhoſpitable woods, for many days toge-
" ther, they were obliged to carry water and
" proviſions with them. Notwithſtanding
" this, many of them periſhed, ſome by hunger,
" but the greateſt number by fatigue, as the
" place from whence they came is at ſuch an
" amazing diſtance from this, and the obſtacles,
" from the nature of the country, ſo great,
" that the journey could ſcarcely be complet-
" ed in ſeven moons."

When this relation was finiſhed, and we had been looking ſtedfaſtly for ſome time on the croud that was going by, we loſt ſight of that peculiarity of feature, which we had before remarked. We then diſcovered that the inhabitants of the depopulated village had all of them paſſed us, and that the part of the train, to which we were now oppoſite, was a numerous body of kidnapped people. Here we indulged our imagination. We thought we beheld in one of them a father, in another an huſband, and in another a ſon, each of whom

was

was forced from his various and tender connections, and without even the opportunity of bidding them adieu. While we were engaged in these and other melancholy reflections, the whole body of slaves had entirely passed us. We turned almost insensibly to look at them again, when we discovered an unhappy man at the end of the train, who could scarcely keep pace with the rest. His feet seemed to have suffered much from long and constant travelling, for he was limping painfully along.

"This man, resumes the African, has tra-
"velled a considerable way. He lived at a
"great distance from hence, and had a large
"family, for whom he was daily to provide.
"As he went out one night to a neighbouring
"spring, to procure water for his thirsty chil-
"dren, he was kidnapped by two *slave hun-*
"*ters*, who sold him in the morning to some
"country merchants for a *bar of iron*. These
"drove him with other slaves, procured al-
"most in the same manner, to the nearest
"market, where the English merchants, to
"whom the train that has just now passed

"us

" us belongs, purchaſed him and two others,
" by means of their travelling agents, for a *piſtol*.
" His wife and children have been long wait-
" ing for his return. But he is gone for ever
" from their ſight: and they muſt be now
" diſconſolate, as they muſt be certain by his
" delay, that he has fallen into the hands of
" the *Chriſtians*.

" And now, as I have mentioned the name
" of *Chriſtians*, a name, by which the Euro-
" peans diſtinguiſh themſelves from us, I could
" wiſh to be informed of the meaning which
" ſuch an appellation may convey. They con-
" ſider themſelves as *men*, but us unfortunate
" Africans, whom they term *Heathens*, as the
" *beaſts* that ſerve us. But ah! how differ-
" ent is the fact! What is *Chriſtianity*, but a
" ſyſtem of *murder* and *oppreſſion*? The cries
" and yells of the unfortunate people, who are
" now ſoon to embark for the regions of ſer-
" vitude, have already pierced my heart.
" Have you not heard me ſigh, while we have
" been talking? Do you not ſee the tears
" that now trickle down my cheeks? and yet
" theſe hardened *Chriſtians* are unable to be

" moved

" moved at all: nay, they will ſcourge them " amidſt their groans, and even ſmile, while " they are torturing them to death. Happy, " happy Heatheniſm! which can deteſt the " vices of Chriſtianity, and feel for the diſtreſſ- " es of mankind."

" But" we reply, " You are totally miſtak- " en: *Chriſtianity* is the moſt perfect and " lovely of moral ſyſtems. It bleſſes even the " hand of perſecution itſelf, and returns good " for evil. But the people againſt whom you " ſo juſty declaim, are not *Chriſtians*. They " are *infidels*. They are *monſters*. They are " out of the common courſe of nature. " Their countrymen at home are generous and " brave. They ſupport the ſick, the lame, " and the blind. They fly to the ſuccour of " the diſtreſſed. They have noble and ſtately " buildings for the ſole purpoſe of benevo- " lence. They are in ſhort, of all nations, the " moſt remarkable for humanity and juſtice."

" But why then," replies the honeſt Afri- " can, " do they ſuffer this? Why is Africa " a ſcene of blood and deſolation? Why " are her children wreſted from her, to ad-

" miniſter

"miniſter to the luxuries and greatneſs of "thoſe whom they never offended? And "why are theſe diſmal cries in vain?"

"Alas!" we reply again, "can the cries "and groans, with which the air now "trembles, be heard acroſs this extenſive "continent? Can the ſouthern winds con-"vey them to the ear of Britain? If they "could reach the generous Engliſhman at "home, they would pierce his heart, as "they have already pierced your own. He "would ſympathize with you in your diſ-"treſs. He would be enraged at the con-"duct of his countrymen, and reſiſt their "tyranny."—

But here a ſhriek unuſually loud, accompanied with a dreadful rattling of chains, interrupted the diſcourſe. The wretched Africans were juſt about to embark: they had turned their face to their country, as if to take a laſt adieu, and, with arms uplifted to the ſky, were making the very atmoſphere reſound with their prayers and imprecations.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

THE foregoing ſcene, though it may be ſaid to be imaginary, is ſtrictly conſiſtent with fact. It is a ſcene, to which the reader himſelf may have been witneſs, if he has ever viſited the place where it is ſuppoſed to lie; as no circumſtance whatever has been inſerted in it, for which the fulleſt and moſt undeniable evidence cannot be produced. We ſhall proceed now to deſcribe, in general terms, the treatment which the wretched Africans undergo, from the time of their embarkation.

When the African ſlaves, who are collected from various quarters, for the purpoſes of ſale, are delivered over to the *receivers*, they are conducted in the manner above deſcribed to the ſhips. Their ſituation on board is beyond all deſcription: for here they are crouded, hundreds of them together, into ſuch a ſmall compaſs as would ſcarcely be thought ſufficient to accommodate twenty, if conſidered as *free men*. This confinement ſoon produces an effect, that

may

may be eaſily imagined. It generates a peſtilential air, which, co-operating with bad proviſions, occaſions ſuch a ſickneſs and mortality among them, that not leſs than * *twenty thouſand* are generally taken off in every yearly tranſportation.

Thus confined in a peſtilential priſon, and almoſt entirely excluded from the chearful face of day, it remains for the ſickly ſurvivors to linger out a miſerable exiſtence, till the voyage is finiſhed. But are no farther evils to be expected in the interim, particularly if we add to their already wretched ſituation the indignities that are daily offered them, and the regret which they muſt conſtantly feel, at being for ever forced from their connexions? Theſe evils are but too apparent. Some of them have reſolved, and, notwithſtanding the

* It is univerſally allowed, that at leaſt one-fifth of the exported negroes periſh in the paſſage. This eſtimate is made from the time in which they are put on board, to the time when they are diſpoſed of in the colonies. The French are ſuppoſed to loſe the greateſt number in the voyage, but particularly from this circumſtance, becauſe their ſlave ſhips are in general ſo very large, that many of the ſlaves that have been put on board ſickly die before the cargo can be completed.

threats of the *receivers*, have carried their reſolves into execution, to ſtarve themſelves to death. Others, when they have been brought upon deck for air, if the leaſt opportunity has offered, have leaped into the ſea, and terminated their miſeries at once. Others, in a fit of deſpair, have attempted to riſe and regain their liberty. But here what a ſcene of barbarity has conſtantly enſued. Some of them have been inſtantly killed upon the ſpot; ſome have been taken from the hold, have been bruiſed and mutilated in the moſt barbarous and ſhocking manner, and have been returned bleeding to their companions, as a ſad example of reſiſtance; while others, tied to the ropes of the ſhip, and mangled alternately with the whip and knife, have been left in that horrid ſituation till they have expired.

But this is not the only inhuman treatment which they are frequently obliged to undergo; for if there ſhould be any neceſſity, from tempeſtuous weather, for lightening the ſhip; or if it ſhould be preſumed on the voyage, that the proviſions will fall ſhort before the port can be made, they are, many of them, thrown into

into the ſea, without any compunction of mind on the part of the *receivers*, and without any other regret for their loſs, than that which *avarice* inſpires. Wretched ſurvivors! what muſt be their feelings at ſuch a ſight! how muſt they tremble to think of that ſervitude which is approaching, when the very *dogs* of the *receivers* have been retained on board, and preferred to their unoffending countrymen. But indeed ſo lightly are theſe unhappy people eſteemed, that their lives have been even taken away upon ſpeculation: there has been an inſtance, * within the laſt five years, of *one hundred and thirty-two* of them

* This inſtance happened in a ſhip, commanded by one Collingwood. On the 29th of November, 1781, fifty-four of them were thrown into the ſea alive; on the 30th, forty-two more; and in about three days afterwards, twenty-ſix. Ten others, who were brought upon the deck for the ſame purpoſe, did not wait to be hand-cuffed, but bravely leaped into the ſea, and ſhared the fate of their companions. It is a fact, that the people on board this ſhip had not been put upon ſhort allowance. The excuſe which this execrable wretch made on board for his conduct, was the following: "*That if the ſlaves, who were then ſickly, had* "*died a natural death, the loſs would have been the owners; but* "*as they were thrown alive into the ſea, it would fall upon the un-* "*derwriters.*"

being thrown into the ſea, becauſe it was ſuppoſed, that, by this *trick*, their value could be recovered from the inſurers.

But if the ſhip ſhould arrive ſafe at its deſtined port, a circumſtance which does not always happen, (for ſome have been blown up, and many loſt) the wretched Africans do not find an alleviation of their ſorrow. Here they are again expoſed to ſale. Here they are again ſubjected to the inſpection of other brutal *receivers*, who examine and treat them with an inhumanity at which even avarice ſhould bluſh. To this mortifying circumſtance is added another, that they are picked out, as the purchaſer pleaſes, without any conſideration whether the wife is ſeparated from her huſband, or the mother from her ſon: and if theſe cruel inſtances of ſeparation ſhould happen; if relations, when they find themſelves about to be parted, ſhould cling together; or if filial, conjugal, or parental affection, ſhould detain them but a moment longer in each other's arms, than theſe *ſecond receivers* ſhould think ſufficient, the laſh inſtantly ſevers them from their embraces.

We

We cannot close our account of the treatment, which the wretched Africans undergo while in the hands of the *first receivers*, without mentioning an instance of wanton barbarity, which happened some time ago; particularly as it may be inserted with propriety in the present place, and may give the reader a better idea of the cruelties to which they are continually exposed, than any that he may have yet conceived. To avoid making a mistake, we shall take the liberty that has been allowed us, and transcribe it from a little manuscript account, with which we have been favoured by a * person of the strictest integrity, and who was at that time in the place where the transaction happened. "Not long "after," says he, (continuing his account)

* This gentleman is at present resident in England. The author of this Essay applied to him for some information on the treatment of slaves, so far as his own knowledge was concerned. He was so obliging as to furnish him with the written account alluded to, interspersed only with such instances as he himself could undertake to answer for. The author, as he has never met with these instances before, and as they are of such high authority, intends to transcribe two or three of them, and insert them in the fourth chapter. They will be found in inverted commas.

"the

" the perpetrator of a cruel murder, commit-
" ted in open day light, in the moſt public
" part of a town, which was the ſeat of go-
" vernment, eſcaped every other notice than
" the curſes of a few of the more humane
" witneſſes of his barbarity. An officer of a
" Guinea ſhip, who had the care of a number
" of new ſlaves, and was returning from the
" *ſale-yard* to the veſſel, with ſuch as remained
" unſold, obſerved a ſtout fellow among them
" rather ſlow in his motions, which he there-
" fore quickened with his rattan. The ſlave
" ſoon afterwards fell down, and was raiſed
" by the ſame application. Moving forwards
" a few yards, he fell down again; and this
" being taken as a proof of his ſullen perverſe
" ſpirit, the enraged officer furiouſly repeated
" his blows till he expired at his feet. The
" brute coolly ordered ſome of the ſurviving
" ſlaves to carry the dead body to the water's
" ſide, where, without any ceremony or de-
" lay, being thrown into the ſea, the tragedy
" was ſuppoſed to have been immediately fi-
" niſhed by the not more inhuman ſharks,
" with which the harbour then abounded.

" Theſe

"These voracious fish were supposed to have "followed the vessels from the coast of Afri- "ca, in which ten thousand slaves were im- "ported in that one season, being allured by "the stench, and daily fed by the dead car- "cases thrown overboard on the voyage."

If the reader should observe here, that cattle are better protected in this country, than slaves in the colonies, his observation will be just. The beast which is driven to market is defended by law from the goad of the driver; whereas the wretched African, though an human being, and whose feelings receive of course a double poignancy from the power of reflection, is unnoticed in this respect in the colonial code, and may be goaded and beaten till he expires.

We may now take our leave of the *first receivers*. Their crime has been already estimated; and to reason farther upon it would be unnecessary. For where the conduct of men is so manifestly impious, there can be no need either of a single argument or a reflection; as every reader of sensibility will anticipate them in his own feelings.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

WHEN the wretched Africans are thus put into the hands of the *ſecond receivers*, they are conveyed to the plantations, where they are totally conſidered as *cattle*, or *beaſts of labour*; their very children, if any ſhould be born to them in that ſituation, being previouſly deſtined to the condition of their parents. But here a queſtion ariſes, which will interrupt the thread of the narration for a little time, viz. how far their deſcendants, who compoſe the fifth order of ſlaves, are juſtly reduced to ſervitude, and upon what principles the *receivers* defend their conduct.

Authors have been at great pains to inquire, why, in the ancient ſervitude, the child has uniformly followed the condition of the mother. But we conceive that they would have ſaved themſelves much trouble, and have done themſelves more credit, if inſtead of endeavouring to reconcile the cuſtom with *heathen* notions, or their own laboured conjectures, they had ſhewn its inconſiſtency with reaſon and nature, and its repugnancy to common juſtice. Suffice it to ſay, that the whole theory

of

of the ancients, with reſpect to the deſcendants of ſlaves, may be reduced to this principle, " that as the parents, by becoming *pro-*
" *perty*, were wholly conſidered as *cattle*, their
" children, like *the progeny of cattle*, inherited
" their parental lot."

Such alſo is the excuſe of the tyrannical *receivers* before-mentioned. They allege, that they have purchaſed the parents, that they can ſell and diſpoſe of them as they pleaſe, that they poſſeſs them under the ſame laws and limitations as their cattle, and that their children, like the progeny of theſe, become their property *by birth.*

But the abſurdity of the argument will immediately appear. It depends wholly on the ſuppoſition, that the parents are *brutes*. If they are *brutes*, we ſhall inſtantly ceaſe to contend: if they are *men*, which we think it not difficult to prove, the argument muſt immediately fall, as we have already ſhewn that there cannot juſtly be any *property* whatever in the *human ſpecies.*

It has appeared alſo, in the ſecond part of this Eſſay, that as nature made every man's body and mind *his own*, ſo no *juſt* perſon can be reduced

reduced to ſlavery againſt his own *conſent*. Do the unfortunate offſpring ever *conſent* to be ſlaves?—They are ſlaves from their birth.—Are they *guilty* of crimes, that they loſe their freedom?—They are ſlaves when they cannot ſpeak.—Are their *parents* abandoned? The crimes of the parents cannot juſtly extend to the children.

Thus then muſt the tyrannical *receivers* who preſume to ſentence the children of ſlaves to ſervitude, if they mean to diſpute on the juſtice of their cauſe, either allow them to have been *brutes* from their birth, or to have been guilty of crimes at a time when they were incapable of offending the very *King of Kings*.

CHAP. IV.

BUT to return to the narration. When the wretched Africans are conveyed to the plantations, they are conſidered as *beaſts of labour*, and are put to their reſpective work. Having led, in their own country, a life of indolence and eaſe, where the earth brings forth ſpontaneouſly the comforts of life, and ſpares frequently the toil and trouble of culti-

cultivation, they can hardly be expected to endure the drudgeries of ſervitude. Calculations are accordingly made upon their lives. It is conjectured, that if three in four ſurvive what is called the *ſeaſoning*, the bargain is highly favourable. This ſeaſoning is ſaid to expire, when the two firſt years of their ſervitude are completed: It is the time which an African muſt take to be ſo accuſtomed to the colony, as to be able to endure the common labour of a plantation, and to be put into the *gang*. At the end of this period the calculations become verified, * *twenty thouſand*

* One third of the whole number imported, is often computed to be loſt in the ſeaſoning, which, in round numbers, will be 27,000. The loſs in the ſeaſoning depends, in a great meaſure, on two circumſtances, viz. on the number of what are called refuſe ſlaves that are imported, and on the quantity of new land in the colony. In the French windward iſlands of Martinico, and Guadaloupe, which are cleared and highly cultivated, and in our old ſmall iſlands, one fourth, including refuſe ſlaves, is conſidered as a general proportion. But in St. Domingo, where there is a great deal of new land annually taken into culture, and in other colonies in the ſame ſituation, the general proportion, including refuſe ſlaves, is found to be one third. This therefore is a lower eſtimate than the former, and reduces the number to about 23,000. We may obſerve, that this is the common eſtimate, but we have reduced it to 20,000 to make it free from all objection.

of

of thoſe, who are annually imported, dying before the ſeaſoning is over. This is ſurely an horrid and awful conſideration: and thus does it appear, (and let it be remembered, that it ist he loweſt calculation that has been ever made upon the ſubject) that out of every annual ſupply that is ſhipped from the coaſt of Africa, ‡ *forty thouſand lives* are regularly expended, even before it can be ſaid, that there is really any additional ſtock for the colonies.

When the ſeaſoning is over, and the ſurvivors are thus enabled to endure the uſual taſk of ſlaves, they are conſidered as real and ſubſtantial ſupplies. * From this period therefore we ſhall deſcribe their ſituation.

They

‡ Including the number that periſh on the voyage, and in the ſeaſoning. It is generally thought that not half the number purchaſed can be conſidered as an additional ſtock, and of courſe that 50,000 are conſumed within the firſt two years from their embarkation.

* That part of the account, that has been hitherto given, extends to all the Europeans and their coloniſts, who are concerned in this horrid practice. But we are ſorry that we muſt now make a diſtinction, and confine the remaining part of it to the coloniſts of the Britiſh Weſt India iſlands, and to thoſe of the ſouthern provinces of North America. As the employment of ſlaves is different

They are ſummoned at five in the morning to begin their work. This work may be divided into two kinds, the culture of the fields, and the collection of graſs for cattle. The laſt is the moſt laborious and intolerable employment; as the graſs can only be collected blade by blade, and is to be fetched frequently twice a day at a conſiderable diſtance from the plantation. In theſe two occupations they are jointly taken up, with no other intermiſſion than that of taking their ſubſiſtence twice, till nine at night. They then ſeparate for their reſpective huts, when they gather ſticks, prepare their ſupper, and attend their families. This employs them till midnight, when they go to reſt. Such is their daily way of life for rather more than half the year. They are *ſixteen* hours, including two intervals at meals, in the ſervice of their maſter: they are employed *three* afterwards in

ent in the two parts of the world laſt mentioned, we ſhall content ourſelves with deſcribing it, as it exiſts in one of them, and we ſhall afterwards annex ſuch treatment and ſuch conſequences as are applicable to both. We have only to add, that the reader muſt not conſider our account as *univerſally*, but only *generally*, true.

their

their own neceſſary concerns; *five* only remain for ſleep, and their day is finiſhed.

During the remaining portion of the year, or the time of crop, the nature as well as the time of their employment, is conſiderably changed. The whole gang is generally divided into two or three bodies. One of theſe, beſides the ordinary labour of the day, is kept in turn at the mills, that are conſtantly going, during the whole of the night. This is a dreadful encroachment upon their time of reſt, which was before too ſhort to permit them perfectly to refreſh their wearied limbs, and actually reduces their ſleep, as long as this ſeaſon laſts, to about three hours and an half a night, upon a moderate * computation. Thoſe who can keep their eyes open during their nightly labour, and are willing to reſiſt the drowſineſs that is continually coming upon them, are preſently worn out; while ſome of thoſe, who are overcome, and who feed the mill between aſleep and

* This computation is made on a ſuppoſition, that the gang is divided into three bodies; we call it therefore moderate, becauſe the gang is frequently divided into two bodies, which muſt therefore ſet up alternately *every other night*.

awake,

awake, ſuffer, for thus obeying the calls of nature, by the † loſs of a limb. In this manner they go on, with little or no reſpite from their work, till the crop ſeaſon is over, when the year (from the time of our firſt deſcription) is completed.

* To ſupport a life of ſuch unparalleled drudgery, we ſhould at leaſt expect to find, that they were comfortably clothed, and plentifully fed. But ſad reverſe! they have ſcarcely a covering to defend themſelves againſt the inclemency of the night. Their proviſions are frequently bad, and are always dealt out to them with ſuch a ſparing hand, that the means of a bare livelihood are not placed within the reach of four out of five of theſe unhappy people. It is a fact, that many of the diſorders of ſlaves are contracted from eating the vegetables, which their little ſpots produce, before they are ſufficiently

† An hand or arm being frequently ground off.

* The reader will ſcarcely believe it, but it is a fact, that a ſlave's annual allowance from his maſter, for proviſions, clothing, medicines when ſick, &c. is limited, upon an average, to thirty ſhillings.

ripe:

ripe: a clear indication, that the calls of hunger are frequently ſo preſſing, as not to ſuffer them to wait till they can really enjoy them.

This ſituation, of a want of the common neceſſaries of life, added to that of hard and continual labour, muſt be ſufficiently painful of itſelf. How then muſt the pain be ſharpened, if it be accompanied with ſeverity! if an unfortunate ſlave does not come into the field exactly at the appointed time, if, drooping with ſickneſs or fatigue, he appears to work unwillingly, or if the bundle of graſs that he has been collecting, appears too ſmall in the eye of the overſeer, he is equally ſure of experiencing the whip This inſtrument eraſes the ſkin, and cuts out ſmall portions of the fleſh at almoſt every ſtroke; and is ſo frequently applied, that the ſmack of it is all day long in the ears of thoſe who are in the vicinity of the plantations. This ſeverity of maſters, or managers, to their ſlaves, which is conſidered only as common diſcipline, is attended with bad effects. It enables them to behold inſtances of cruelty without

without commiſeration, and to be guilty of them without remorſe. Hence thoſe many acts of deliberate mutilation, that have taken place on the ſlighteſt occaſions: hence thoſe many acts of inferior, though ſhocking, barbarity, that have taken place without any occaſion at all: * the very ſlitting of ears has been conſidered as an operation, ſo perfectly devoid of pain, as to have been performed for no other reaſon than that for which a brand is ſet upon cattle, as *a mark of property*.

But this is not the only effect, which this ſeverity produces: for while it hardens their hearts, and makes them inſenſible of the miſery of their fellow-creatures, it begets a

* "A boy having received ſix ſlaves as a preſent from his fa-"ther, immediately ſlit their ears, and for the following reaſon, "that as his father was a whimſical man, he might claim them "again, unleſs they were marked." We do not mention this inſtance as a confirmation of the paſſage to which it is annexed, but only to ſhew how cautious we ought to be in giving credit to what may be advanced in any work written in defence of ſlavery, by any native of the colonies: for being trained up to ſcenes of cruelty from his cradle, he may, conſiſtently with his own feelings, repreſent that treatment as mild, at which we, who have never been uſed to ſee them, ſhould abſolutely ſhudder.

turn for wanton cruelty. As a proof of this, we ſhall mention one, among the many inſtances that occur, where ingenuity has been exerted in contriving modes of torture. "An iron coffin, with holes in it, was kept by "a certain coloniſt, as an auxiliary to the laſh. "In this the poor victim of the maſter's reſent- "ment was incloſed, and placed ſufficiently "near a fire, to occaſion extreme pain, and "conſequently ſhrieks and groans, until the "revenge of the maſter was ſatiated with- "out any other inconvenience on his part, "than a temporary ſuſpenſion of the ſlave's la- "bour. Had he been flogged to death, or his "limbs mutilated, the intereſt of the brutal "tyrant would have ſuffered a more irrepara- "ble loſs.

"In mentioning this inſtance, we do not "mean to inſinuate, that it is common. We "know that it was reprobated by many. All "that we would infer from it is, that where "men are habituated to a ſyſtem of ſeverity, "they become *wantonly cruel*, and that the "mere toleration of ſuch an inſtrument of "torture, in any country, is a clear indication,

"*that*

"*that this wretched claſs of men do not there en-*
"*joy the protection of any laws, that may be*
"*pretended to have been enacted in their fa-*
"*vour.*"

Such then is the general ſituation of the unfortunate Africans. They are beaten and tortured at diſcretion. They are badly clothed. They are miſerably fed. Their drudgery is intenſe and inceſſant, and their reſt ſhort. For ſcarcely are their heads reclined, ſcarcely have their bodies a reſpite from the labour of the day, or the cruel hand of the overſeer, but they are ſummoned to renew their ſorrows. In this manner they go on from year to year, in a ſtate of the loweſt degradation, without a ſingle law to protect them, without the poſſibility of redreſs, without a hope that their ſituation will be changed, unleſs death ſhould terminate the ſcene.

Having deſcribed the general ſituation of theſe unfortunate people, we ſhall now take notice of the common conſequences that are found to attend it, and relate them ſeparately, as they reſult either from long and

painful *labour*, a *want* of the common neceſſaries of life, or continual *ſeverity*.

Oppreſſed by a daily taſk of ſuch immoderate labour as human nature is utterly unable to perform, many of them run away from their maſters. They fly to the receſſes of the mountains, where they chooſe rather to live upon any thing that the ſoil affords them, nay, the very ſoil itſelf, than return to that *happy ſituation*, which is repreſented by the *receivers*, as the condition of a ſlave.

It ſometimes happens, that the manager of a mountain plantation, falls in with one of theſe; he immediately ſeizes him, and threatens to carry him to his former maſter, unleſs he will conſent to live on the mountain and cultivate his ground. When his plantation is put in order, he carries the delinquent home, abandons him to all the ſuggeſtions of deſpotic rage, and accepts a reward for his *honeſty*. The unhappy wretch is chained, ſcourged, tortured; and all this, becauſe he obeyed the dictates of nature, and wanted to be free. And who is there that would not have done the ſame thing, in the

ſame

ſame ſituation? Who is there, that has once known the charms of liberty, that would not fly from deſpotiſm? And yet, by the impious laws of the *receivers*, the * abſence of ſix months from the laſh of tyranny is——*death*.

But this law is even mild, when compared with another againſt the ſame offence, which was in force ſometime ago, and which we fear is even now in force, in ſome of thoſe colonies which this account of the treatment comprehends. "Advertiſements have frequently appeared there, offering a reward for "the apprehending of fugitive ſlaves either "alive or *dead*. The following inſtance was "given us by a perſon of unqueſtionable veracity, under whoſe own obſervation it fell. "As he was travelling in one of the colonies

* In this caſe he is conſidered as a criminal againſt the ſtate. The *marſhal*, an officer anſwering to our ſheriff, ſuperintends his execution, and the maſter receives the value of the ſlave from the public treaſury. We may obſerve here, that in all caſes where the delinquent is a criminal of the ſtate, he is executed, and his value is received in the ſame manner. He is tried and condemned by two or three juſtices of the peace, and without any intervention of a *jury*.

"alluded

"alluded to, he obſerved ſome people in "purſuit of a poor wretch, who was ſeek-"ing in the wilderneſs an aſylum from his la-"bours. He heard the diſcharge of a gun, "and ſoon afterwards ſtopping at an houſe "for refreſhment, the head of the fugi-"tive, ſtill reeking with blood, was brought "in and laid upon a table with exulta-"tion. The production of ſuch a trophy "was the proof *required by law* to entitle "the heroes to their reward." Now reader determine if you can, who were the moſt execrable; the rulers of the ſtate in authorizing murder, or the people in being bribed to commit it.

This is one of the common conſequences of that immoderate ſhare of labour, which is impoſed upon them; nor is that, which is the reſult of a ſcanty allowance of food, leſs to be lamented. The wretched African is often ſo deeply pierced by the excruciating fangs of hunger, as almoſt to be driven to deſpair. What is he to do in ſuch a trying ſituation? Let him apply to the *receivers*. Alas! the majeſty of *receiverſhip* is too ſacred for the

the appeal, and the intruſion would be fatal. Thus attacked on the one hand, and ſhut out from every poſſibility of relief on the other, he has only the choice of being ſtarved, or of relieving his neceſſities by taking a ſmall portion of the fruits of his own labour. Horrid crime! to be found eating the cane, which probably his own hands have planted, and to be eating it, becauſe his neceſſities were preſſing! This crime however is of ſuch a magnitude, as always to be accompanied with the whip; and ſo unmercifully has it been applied on ſuch an occaſion, as to have been the cauſe, in wet weather, of the delinquent's death. But the ſmart of the whip has not been the only pain that the wretched Africans have experienced. Any thing that paſſion could ſeize, and convert into an inſtrument of puniſhment, has been uſed; and, horrid to relate! the very knife has not been overlooked in the fit of phrenzy. Ears have been ſlit, eyes have been beaten out, and bones have been broken; and ſo frequently has this been the caſe, that it has been a matter of conſtant lamentation with diſintereſted people, who out

of

of curioſity have attended the * markets to which theſe unhappy people weekly reſort, that they have not been able to turn their eyes on any group of them whatever, but they have beheld theſe inhuman marks of paſſion, deſpotiſm, and caprice.

But theſe inſtances of barbarity have not been able to deter them from ſimilar proceedings. And indeed, how can it be expected that they ſhould? They have ſtill the ſame appetite to be ſatisfied as before, and to drive them to deſperation. They creep out clandeſtinely by night, and go in ſearch of food into their maſter's, or ſome neighbouring plantation. But here they are almoſt equally ſure of ſuffering. The watchman, who will be puniſhed himſelf if he neglects his duty, frequently ſeizes them in the fact. No excuſe or intreaty will avail; he muſt puniſh them for an example, and he muſt puniſh them, not with a ſtick, nor with a whip, but with a cutlaſs. Thus it happens, that theſe unhappy

* Particularly in Jamaica. Theſe obſervations were made by diſintereſted people, who were there for three or four years during the late war.

ſlaves,

ſlaves, if they are taken, are either ſent away mangled in a barbarous manner, or are killed upon the ſpot.

We may now mention the conſequences of the ſeverity. The wretched Africans, daily ſubjected to the laſh, and unmercifully whipt and beaten on every trifling occaſion, have been found to reſiſt their oppoſers. Unpardonable crime! that they ſhould have the feelings of nature! that their breaſts ſhould glow with reſentment on an injury! that they ſhould be ſo far overcome, as to reſiſt thoſe, whom *they are under no obligations to obey*, and whoſe only title to their ſervices conſiſts in *a violation of the rights of men!* What has been the conſequence?—But here let us ſpare the feelings of the reader, (we wiſh we could ſpare our own) and let us only ſay, without a recital of the cruelty, *that they have been murdered at the diſcretion of their maſters.* For let the reader obſerve, that the life of an African is only valued at a price that would ſcarcely purchaſe an horſe; that the maſter has a power of murdering his ſlave, if he pays but a trifling fine; and that the murder muſt

be

be attended with uncommon circumſtances of horror, if it even produces an inquiry.

Immortal Alfred! father of our invaluable conſtitution! parent of the civil bleſſings we enjoy! how ought thy laws to excite our love and veneration, who haſt forbidden us, thy poſterity, to tremble at the frown of tyrants! how ought they to perpetuate thy name, as venerable, to the remoteſt ages, who has ſecured, even to the meaneſt ſervant, a fair and impartial trial! How much does nature approve thy laws, as conſiſtent with her own feelings, while ſhe abſolutely turns pale, trembles, and recoils, at the inſtitutions of theſe *receivers!* Execrable men! you do not murder the horſe on which you only ride; you do not mutilate the cow, which only affords you her milk; you do not torture the dog, which is but a partial ſervant of your pleaſures: but theſe unfortunate men, for whom you derive your very pleaſures and your fortunes, you torture, mutilate, murder at diſcretion! Sleep then, you *receivers*, if you can, while you ſcarcely allow theſe unfortunate people to reſt at all! feaſt if you can, and indulge

dulge your genius, while you daily apply to theſe unfortunate people the ſtings of ſeverity and hunger! exult in riches, at which even avarice ought to ſhudder, and which humanity muſt deteſt!

CHAP. V.

SOME people may ſuppoſe, from the melancholy account that has been given in the preceding chapter, that we have been abſolutely dealing in romance: that the ſcene exhibited is rather a dreary picture of the imagination, than a repreſentation of fact. Would to heaven, for the honour of human nature, that this were really the caſe! We wiſh we could ſay, that we have no teſtimony to produce for any of our aſſertions, and that our deſcription of the general treatment of ſlaves has been greatly exaggerated.

But the *receivers*, notwithſtanding the ample and diſintereſted evidence that can be brought on the occaſion, do not admit the deſcription to be true. They ſay firſt, "that if

"the

" the ſlavery were ſuch as has been now re-
" preſented, no human being could poſſibly
" ſupport it long." Melancholy truth! the wretched Africans generally periſh in their prime. Let them reflect upon the prodigious ſupplies that are *annually* required, and their argument will be nothing leſs than a confeſſion, that the ſlavery has been juſtly depicted.

They appeal next to every man's own reaſon, and deſire him to think ſeriouſly, whether " ſelf-intereſt will not always reſtrain the
" maſter from acts of cruelty to the ſlave, and
" whether ſuch accounts therefore, as the
" foregoing, do not contain within them-
" ſelves, their own refutation." We anſwer, " No." For if this reſtraining principle be as powerful as it is imagined, why does not the general conduct of men afford us a better picture? What, is imprudence, or what is vice, but a departure from every man's own intereſt, and yet theſe are the characteriſtics of more than half the world?——

—But, to come more cloſely to the preſent caſe, *ſelf-intereſt* will be found but a weak barrier againſt the ſallies of *paſſion:* particularly

larly where it has been daily indulged in its greateſt latitude, and there are no laws to reſtrain its calamitous effects. If the obſervation be true, that paſſion is a ſhort madneſs, then it is evident that ſelf-intereſt, and every other conſideration, muſt be loſt, ſo long as it continues. We cannot have a ſtronger inſtance of this, than in a circumſtance related in the ſecond part of this Eſſay, " that though the Africans have gone to war for the expreſs purpoſe of procuring ſlaves, yet ſo great has been their reſentment at the reſiſtance they have frequently found, that their *paſſion* has entirely got the better of their *intereſt*, and they have murdered all without any diſcrimination, either of age or ſex." Such may be preſumed to be the caſe with the no leſs ſavage *receivers*.——Impreſſed with the moſt haughty and tyrannical notions, eaſily provoked, accuſtomed to indulge their anger, and, above all, habituated to ſcenes of cruelty, and unawed by the fear of laws, they will hardly be found to be exempt from the common failings of human nature, and to ſpare an unlucky ſlave, at a time when men of a cooler temper,

temper, and better regulated paſſions, are ſo frequently blind to their own intereſt.

But if *paſſion* may be ſuppoſed to be generally more than a balance for *intereſt*, how muſt the ſcale be turned in favour of the melancholy picture exhibited, when we reflect that *ſelf-preſervation* additionally ſteps in, and demands the moſt *rigorous ſeverity*. For when we conſider that where there is *one* maſter, there are *fifty* ſlaves; that the latter have been all forcibly torn from their country, and are retained in their preſent ſituation by violence; that they are perpetually at war in their hearts with their oppreſſors, and are continually cheriſhing the ſeeds of revenge; it is evident that even *avarice* herſelf, however cool and deliberate, however free from paſſion and caprice, muſt ſacrifice her own ſordid feelings, and adopt a ſyſtem of tyranny and oppreſſion, which it muſt be ruinous to purſue.

Thus then, if no picture had been drawn of the ſituation of ſlaves, and it had been left ſolely to every man's ſober judgment to determine, what it might probably be, he would conclude, that if the ſituation were juſtly deſcribed,

ſcribed, the page muſt be frequently ſtained with acts of uncommon cruelty.

It remains only to make a reply to an objection, that is uſually advanced againſt particular inſtances of cruelty to ſlaves, as recorded by various writers. It is ſaid that "ſome "of theſe are ſo inconceivably, and beyond all "example inhuman, that their very exceſs "above the common meaſure of cruelty ſhews "them at once exaggerated and incredible." But their credibility ſhall be eſtimated by a ſuppoſition. Let us ſuppoſe that the following inſtance had been recorded by a writer of the higheſt reputation, "that the maſter of a "ſhip, bound to the weſtern colonies with "ſlaves, on a preſumption that many of them "would die, *ſelected an hundred and thirty-* "*two* of the moſt ſickly, and ordered them to "be thrown into the ſea, to recover their "value from the inſurers, and, above all, that "the fatal order was put into execution." What would the reader have thought on the occaſion? Would he have believed the fact? It would have ſurely ſtaggered his faith; becauſe he could never have heard that any *one* man

man ever was, and could never have ſuppoſed that any *one* man ever could be, guilty of the murder of *ſuch a number* of his fellow creatures. But when he is informed that ſuch a fact as this came before a * court of juſtice in this very country; that it happened within the laſt five years; that hundreds can come forward and ſay, that they heard the melancholy evidence with tears; what bounds is he to place to his belief? The great God, who looks down upon all his creatures with the ſame impartial eye, ſeems to have infatuated the parties concerned, that they might bring the horrid circumſtance to light, that it might be recorded in the annals of a public court, as an authentic ſpecimen of the treatment which the unfortunate Africans undergo, and at the ſame time, as an argument to ſhew, that there is no ſpecies of cruelty that is recorded to have been exerciſed upon theſe wretched people, ſo enormous that it may not *readily be believed.*

* The action was brought by the owners againſt the underwriters, to recover the value of the *murdered* ſlaves. It was tried at Guildhall.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

IF the treatment then, as before deſcribed, is confirmed by reaſon, and the great credit that is due to diſintereſted writers on the ſubject; if the unfortunate Africans are uſed, as if their fleſh were ſtone, and their vitals braſs, by what arguments do you *receivers* defend your conduct?

You ſay that a great part of your ſavage treatment conſiſts in puniſhment for real offences, and frequently for ſuch offences as all civilized nations have concurred in puniſhing. The firſt charge that you exhibit againſt them is ſpecific, it is that of *theft*. But how much rather ought you *receivers* to bluſh, who reduce them to ſuch a ſituation! who reduce them to the dreadful alternative, that they muſt either *ſteal* or *periſh!* How much rather ought you *receivers* to be conſidered as *robbers* yourſelves, who cauſe theſe unfortunate people to be *ſtolen!* And how much greater is your crimes, who are *robbers of human liberty!*

The next charge which you exhibit againſt them, is general, it is that of *rebellion*; a crime of ſuch a latitude, that you can impoſe it upon almoſt every action, and of ſuch a nature, that you always annex to it the moſt excruciating pain. But what a contradiction is this to common ſenſe! Have the wretched Africans formally reſigned their freedom? Have you any other claim upon their obedience, than that of force? If then they are your ſubjects, you violate the laws of government by making them unhappy. But if they are not your ſubjects, then, even though they ſhould reſiſt your proceedings, they are not *rebellious*.

But what do you ſay to that long catalogue of offences which you puniſh, and of which no people but yourſelves take cognizance at all? You ſay that the wiſdom of legiſlation has inſerted it in the colonial laws, and that you puniſh by authority. But do you allude to that execrable code, that *authoriſes murder*? that tempts an unoffended perſon to kill the ſlave, that abhors and flies your ſervice? that delegates a power, which no hoſt of men, which not all the world, can poſſeſs?——

Or,

Or,—What do you ſay to that daily unmerited ſeverity, which you conſider only as common diſcipline? Here you ſay that the Africans are vicious, that they are all of them ill-diſpoſed, that you muſt of neceſſity be ſevere. But can they be well-diſpoſed to their oppreſſors? In their own country they were juſt, generous, hoſpitable: qualities, which all the African hiſtorians allow them eminently to poſſeſs. If then they are vicious, they muſt have contracted many of their vices from yourſelves; and as to their own native vices, if any have been imported with them, are they not amiable, when compared with yours?

Thus then do the excuſes, which have been hitherto made by the *receivers*, force a relation of ſuch circumſtances, as makes their conduct totally inexcuſable, and, inſtead of diminiſhing at all, highly aggravates their guilt.

CHAP. VII.

WE come now to that other ſyſtem of reaſoning, which is always applied when the former is confuted; "that the Africans are "an inferior link of the chain of nature, and "are made for ſlavery."

This aſſertion is proved by two arguments; the firſt of which was advanced alſo by the ancients, and is drawn from the *inferiority of their capacities.*

Let us allow then for a moment, that they appear to have no parts, that they appear to be void of underſtanding. And is this wonderful, when you *receivers* depreſs their ſenſes by hunger? Is this wonderful, when by inceſſant labour, the continual application of the laſh, and the moſt inhuman treatment that imagination can deviſe, you overwhelm their genius, and hinder it from breaking forth?—No—You confound their abilities by the ſeverity of their ſervitude: for as a ſpark of fire, if cruſhed by too great a weight of incumbent fuel, cannot be blown into a flame, but ſuddenly expires, ſo the human mind, if depreſſed by

by rigorous ſervitude, cannot be excited to a diſplay of thoſe faculties, which might otherwiſe have ſhone with the brighteſt luſtre.

Neither is it wonderful in another point of view. For what is it that awakens the abilities of men, and diſtinguiſhes them from the common herd? Is it not often the amiable hope of becoming ſerviceable to individuals, or the ſtate? Is it not often the hope of riches, or of power? Is it not frequently the hope of temporary honours, or a laſting fame? Theſe principles have all a wonderful effect upon the mind. They call upon it to exert its faculties, and bring thoſe talents to the public view, which had otherwiſe been concealed. But the unfortunate Africans have no ſuch incitements as theſe, that they ſhould ſhew their genius. They have no hope of riches, power, honours, fame. They have no hope but this, that their miſeries will be ſoon terminated by death.

And here we cannot but cenſure and expoſe the murmurings of the unthinking and the gay; who, going on in a continual round of pleaſure and proſperity, repine at the will

of

of Providence, as exhibited in the ſhortneſs of human duration. But let a weak and infirm old age overtake them: let them experience calamities: let them feel but half the miſeries which the wretched Africans undergo, and they will praiſe the goodneſs of Providence, who hath made them mortal; who hath preſcribed certain ordinary bounds to the life of man; and who, by ſuch a limitation, hath given all men this comfortable hope, that however perſecuted in life, a time will come, in the common courſe of nature, when their ſufferings will have an end.

Such then is the nature of this ſervitude, that we can hardly expect to find in thoſe, who undergo it, even the glimpſe of genius. For if their minds are in a continual ſtate of depreſſion, and if they have no expectations in life to awaken their abilities, and make them eminent, we cannot be ſurprized if a ſullen gloomy ſtupidity ſhould be the leading mark in their character; or if they ſhould appear inferior to thoſe, who do not only enjoy the invaluable bleſſings of freedom, but have every proſpect before their eyes that can allure them

them to exert their faculties. Now, if to theſe conſiderations we add, that the wretched Africans are torn from their country in a ſtate of nature, and that in general, as long as their ſlavery continues, every obſtacle is placed in the way of their improvement, we ſhall have a ſufficient anſwer to any argument that may be drawn from the inferiority of their capacities.

It appears then, from the circumſtances that have been mentioned, that to form a true judgment of the abilities of theſe unfortunate people, we muſt either take a general view of them before their ſlavery commences, or confine our attention to ſuch, as, after it has commenced, have had any opportunity given them of ſhewing their genius either in arts or letters. If, upon ſuch a fair and impartial view, there ſhould be any reaſon to ſuppoſe, that they are at all inferior to others in the ſame ſituation, the argument will then gain ſome of that weight and importance, which it wants at preſent.

In their own country, where we are to ſee them firſt, we muſt expect that the proſpect will

will be unfavourable. They are moſtly in a ſavage ſtate. Their powers of mind are limited to few objects. Their ideas are conſequently few. It appears, however, that they follow the ſame mode of life, and exerciſe the ſame arts, as the anceſtors of thoſe very Europeans, who boaſt of their great ſuperiority, are deſcribed to have done in the ſame uncultivated ſtate. This appears from the Nubian's Geography, the writings of Leo, the Moor, and all the ſubſequent hiſtories, which thoſe, who have viſited the African continent, have written from their own inſpection. Hence three concluſions; that their abilities are ſufficient for their ſituation;—that they are as great as thoſe of other people have been in the ſame ſtage of ſociety;—and that they are as great as thoſe of any civilized people whatever, when the degree of the barbariſm of the one is drawn into a compariſon with that of the civilization of the other.

Let us now follow them to the colonies. They are carried over in the unfavourable ſituation deſcribed. It is obſerved here, that though their abilities cannot be eſtimated high,

high, from a want of cultivation, they are yet various, and that they vary in proportion as the nation from which they have been brought, has advanced more or leſs in the ſcale of ſocial life. This obſervation, which is ſo frequently made, is of great importance: for if their abilities expand in proportion to the improvement of their ſtate, it is a clear indication, that if they were equally improved, they would be equally ingenious.

But here, before we conſider any opportunities that may be afforded them, let it be remembered that even their moſt poliſhed ſituation may be called barbarous, and that this circumſtance, ſhould they appear leſs docile than others, may be conſidered as a ſufficient anſwer to any objection that may be made to their capacities. Notwithſtanding this, when they are put to the mechanical arts, they do not diſcover a want of ingenuity. They attain them in as ſhort a time as the Europeans, and arrive at a degree of excellence equal to that of their teachers. This is a fact, almoſt univerſally known, and affords us this proof, that having learned with facility ſuch of the mechanical

mechanical arts, as they have been taught, they are capable of attaining any other, at leaſt, of the ſame claſs, if they ſhould receive but the ſame inſtruction.

With reſpect to the liberal arts, their proficiency is certainly leſs; but not leſs in proportion to their time and opportunity of ſtudy; not leſs becauſe they are leſs capable of attaining them, but becauſe they have ſeldom or ever an opportunity of learning them at all. It is yet extraordinary that their talents appear, even in ſome of theſe ſciences, in which they are totally uninſtructed. Their abilities in muſic are ſuch as to have been generally noticed. They play frequently upon a variety of inſtruments, without any other aſſiſtance than their own ingenuity. They have alſo tunes of their own compoſition. Some of theſe have been imported among us, are now in uſe, and are admired for their ſprightlineſs and eaſe, though the ungenerous and prejudiced importer has concealed their original.

Neither are their talents in poetry leſs conſpicuous. Every occurrence, if their ſpi-

rits

rits are not too greatly depreſſed, is turned into a ſong. Theſe ſongs are ſaid to be incoherent and nonſenſical. But this proceeds principally from two cauſes, an improper conjunction of words, ariſing from an ignorance of the language in which they compoſe; and a wildneſs of thought, ariſing from the different manner, in which the organs of rude and civilized people will be ſtruck by the ſame object. And as to their want of harmony and rhyme, which is the laſt objection, the difference of pronunciation is the cauſe. Upon the whole, as they are perfectly conſiſtent with their own ideas, and are ſtrictly muſical as pronounced by themſelves, they afford us as high a proof of their poetical powers, as the works of the moſt acknowledged poets.

But where theſe impediments have been removed, where they have received an education, and have known and pronounced the language with propriety, theſe defects have vaniſhed, and their productions have been leſs objectionable. For a proof of this,

we appeal to the writings of an * African girl, who made no contemptible appearance in this ſpecies of compoſition She was kidnapped when only eight years old, and, in the year 1761, was tranſported to America, where ſhe was ſold with other ſlaves. She had no ſchool education there, but receiving ſome little inſtruction from the family, with whom ſhe was ſo fortunate as to live, ſhe obtained ſuch a knowledge of the Engliſh language, within ſixteen months from the time of her arrival, as to be able to ſpeak it and read it to the aſtoniſhment of thoſe who heard her. She ſoon afterwards learned to write, and, having a great inclination to learn the latin tongue, ſhe was indulged by her maſter, and made a progreſs. Her poetical works were publiſhed with his permiſſion, in the year 1773. They contain thirty-eight pieces on different ſubjects. We ſhall beg leave to make a ſhort extract from two or three of them, for the obſervation of the reader.

* Phillis Wheatley, negro ſlave to Mr. John Wheatley, of Boſton, in New-England.

From

* From an Hymn to the Evening.

" Fill'd with the praiſe of him who gives the light,
" And draws the ſable curtains of the night,
" Let placid ſlumbers ſooth each weary mind,
" At morn to wake more heav'nly and refin'd;
" So ſhall the labours of the day begin,
" More pure and guarded from the ſnares of ſin.
——— ——— &c. &c.

From an Hymn to the Morning.

" Aurora hail! and all the thouſand dies,
" That deck thy progreſs through the vaulted ſkies!
" The morn awakes, and wide extends her rays,
" On ev'ry leaf the gentle zephyr plays.
" Harmonious

* Leſt it ſhould be doubted whether theſe Poems are genuine, we ſhall tranſcribe the names of thoſe who ſigned a certificate of their authenticity.

His Excellency Thomas Hutchinſon, Governor.
The Honourable Andrew Oliver, Lieutenant Governor.

The Hon. Thomas Hubbard
The Hon. John Erving
The Hon. James Pitts
The Hon. Harriſon Gray
The Hon. James Bowdoin
John Hancock, Eſq.
Joſeph Green, Eſq.
Richard Carey, Eſq.

The Rev. Cha. Chauncy, D.D.
The Rev. Mather Byles, D. D.
The Rev. Ed. Pemberton, D.D.
The Rev. Andrew Elliot, D.D.
The Rev. Sam. Cooper, D. D.
The Rev. Samuel Mather
The Rev. John Moorhead
Mr. John Wheatley, her Maſter.

" Harmonious lays the feather'd race reſume,
" Dart the bright eye, and ſhake the painted plume.
——— ——— &c. &c.

From Thoughts on Imagination.

" Now here, now there, the roving *fancy* flies,
" Till ſome lov'd object ſtrikes her wand'ring eyes,
" Whoſe ſilken fetters all the ſenſes bind,
" And ſoft captivity involves the mind.

" *Imagination!* who can ſing thy force,
" Or who deſcribe the ſwiftneſs of thy courſe?
" Soaring through air to find the bright abode,
" Th' empyreal palace of the thun'ring God,
" We on thy pinions can ſurpaſs the wind,
" And leave the rolling univerſe behind:
" From ſtar to ſtar the mental opticks rove,
" Meaſure the ſkies, and range the realms above.
" There in one view we graſp the mighty whole,
" Or with new worlds amaze th' unbounded ſoul.
——— ——— &c. &c.

Such is the poetry which we produce as a proof of our aſſertions. How far it has ſucceeded, the reader may by this time have determined in his own mind. We ſhall therefore

therefore only beg leave to accompany it with this obſervation, that if the authoreſs *was deſigned for ſlavery*, (as the argument muſt confeſs) the greater part of the inhabitants of Britain muſt loſe their claim to freedom.

To this poetry we ſhall only add, as a farther proof of their abilities, the Proſe compoſitions of Ignatius Sancho, who received ſome little education. His letters are too well known to make any extract, or indeed any farther mention of him, neceſſary. If other examples of African genius ſhould be required, ſuffice it to ſay, that they can be produced in abundance; and that if we were allowed to enumerate inſtances of African gratitude, patience, fidelity, honour, as ſo many inſtances of good ſenſe, and a ſound underſtanding, we fear that thouſands of the enlightened Europeans would have occaſion to bluſh.

But an objection will be made here, that the two perſons whom we have particularized by name, are prodigies, and that if we were to live for many years, we ſhould ſcarcely meet with two other Africans of the

the ſame deſcription. But we reply, that conſidering their ſituation as before deſcribed, two perſons, above mediocrity in the literary way, are as many as can be expected within a certain period of years; and farther, that if theſe are prodigies, they are only ſuch prodigies as every day would produce, if they had the ſame opportunities of acquiring knowledge as other people, and the ſame expectations in life to excite their genius. This has been conſtantly and ſolemnly aſſerted by the pious Benezet, * whom we have mentioned before, as having devoted a conſiderable part of his time to their inſtruction. This great man, for we cannot but mention him with veneration, had a better opportunity of knowing them than any perſon whatever, and he always uniformly declared, that he could never find a difference between their capacities and thoſe of other people; that they were as capable of reaſoning as any individual Europeans; that they were as capable of the higheſt intellectual attainments; in

* In the Preface.

ſhort,

ſhort, that their abilities were equal, and that they only wanted to be equally cultivated, to afford ſpecimens of as fine productions.

Thus then does it appear from the teſtimony of this venerable man, whoſe authority is ſufficient of itſelf to ſilence all objections againſt African capacity, and from the inſtances that have been produced, and the obſervations that have been made on the occaſion, that if the minds of the Africans were unbroken by ſlavery; if they had the ſame expectations in life as other people, and the ſame opportunities of improvement, they would be equal, in all the various branches of ſcience, to the Europeans; and that the argument that ſtates them "to be an inferior link of "the chain of nature, and deſigned for ſervi-"tude," as far as it depends on the *inferiority of their capacities*, is wholly malevolent and falſe.*

* As to Mr. Hume's aſſertions with reſpect to African capacity, we have paſſed them over in ſilence, as they have been ſo admirably refuted by the learned Dr. Beattie, in his Eſſay on Truth, to which we refer the reader. The whole of this admirable refutation extends from p. 458, to 464.

CHAP. VIII.

THE ſecond argument, by which it is attempted to be proved, "that the Africans "are an inferior link of the chain of nature, "and are deſigned for ſlavery," is drawn from *colour*, and from thoſe other marks, which diſtinguiſh them from the inhabitants of Europe.

To prove this with the greater facility, the *receivers* divide in opinion. Some of them contend that the Africans, from theſe circumſtances, are the deſcendants of Cain: others, that they are the poſterity of Ham; and that as it was declared by divine inſpiration, that theſe ſhould be ſervants to the reſt of the world, ſo they are deſigned for ſlavery; and that the reducing of them to ſuch a ſituation is only the accompliſhment of the will of heaven: while the reſt, conſidering them from the ſame circumſtances as a totally diſtinct ſpecies of men, conclude them to be an inferior link of the chain of nature, and deduce the inference deſcribed.

* Geneſis, ch. iv. 15.

To

To anſwer theſe arguments in the cleareſt and fulleſt manner, we are under the neceſſity of making two ſuppoſitions; firſt, that the ſcriptures are true; ſecondly, that they are falſe.

If then the ſcriptures are true, it is evident that the poſterity of Cain were extinguiſhed in the flood. Thus one of the arguments is no more.

With reſpect to the curſe of Ham, it appears alſo that it was limited; that it did not extend to the poſterity of all his ſons, but only to the deſcendants of him who was called Canaan: by which it was foretold that the Canaanites, a part of the poſterity of Ham, ſhould ſerve the poſterity of Shem and Japhet. Now how does it appear that theſe wretched Africans are the deſcendants of Canaan?—By thoſe marks, it will be ſaid, which diſtinguiſh them from the reſt of the world—But where are theſe marks to be found in the divine writings? In what page is it ſaid that the Canaanites were to be known by their *colour*, their

* Geneſis, ch. ix. 25, 26, 27.

features, their *form*, or the very *hair of their heads*, which is brought into the account?—But alas! ſo far are the divine writings from giving any ſuch account, that they ſhew the aſſertion to be falſe. They ſhew that the ‡ deſcendants of Cuſh were of the colour, to which the advocates for ſlavery allude; and of courſe, that there was no ſuch limitation of colour to the poſterity of Canaan, or the inheritors of the curſe.

Suppoſe we ſhould now ſhew, upon the moſt undeniable evidence, * that thoſe of the

‡ Jeremiah ſays, ch. xiii. 23, "Can the Æthiopian change "his colour, or the leopard his ſpots?" Now the word, which is here tranſlated *Æthiopian*, is in the original Hebrew "*the deſcendant of Cuſh*." which ſhews that this colour was not confined to the deſcendants of *Canaan*, as the advocates for ſlavery aſſert.

* It is very extraordinary that the advocates for ſlavery ſhould conſider thoſe Africans, whom they call negroes, as the deſcendants of *Canaan*, when few hiſtorical facts can be ſo well aſcertained, as that out of the deſcendants of the four ſons of Ham, the deſcendants of Canaan were the only people, (if we except the Carthaginians, who were a colony of Canaan, and were afterwards ruined) who did not ſettle in that quarter of the globe. Africa was incontrovertibly peopled by the poſterity of the three other ſons. We cannot ſhew this in a clearer manner, than in the words of the learned Mr. Bryant, in his letter to Mr. Granville Sharp on this ſubject.

"We

the wretched Africans, who are ſingled out as inheriting the curſe, are the deſcendants of

" We learn from ſcriptures that Ham had four ſons, *Chus*, " *Mizraim*, *Phut*, and *Canaan*, Gen. x. 5, 6. *Canaan* occupied " *Paleſtine*, and the country called by his name: *Mizraim*, *Egypt*: " but *Phut* paſſed deep into *Africa*, and, I believe, moſt of the na- " tions in that part of the world are deſcended from him; at leaſt " more than from any other perſon." *Joſephus* ſays, " *that Phut* " *was the founder of the nations in Lybia, and the people were from him* " *called* Φουτοι *Phuti*." Antiq. L. 1. c. 7. " By *Lybia* he under- " ſtands, as the *Greeks* did, *Africa* in general: for the particular " country called *Lybia Proper*, was peopled by the *Lubim*, or *Le-* " *habim*, one of the branches from *Mizraim*, Λαβιειμ εξ ου Λιβνες. " Chron. Paſchale, p. 29.

" The ſons of *Phut* ſettled in *Mauritania*, where was a country " called *Phutia*, and a river of the like denomination. Maurita- " niæ Fluvius uſque ad præſens Tempus *Phut* dicitur, omniſq; cir- " ca eum Regio *Phutenſis*. Hieron. Tradit. Hebrœæ.—Amnem, " quem vocant *Fut*." Pliny, L. 5. c. 1. Some of this family ſet- " tled above Ægypt, near Æthiopia, and were ſtyled Troglody- " tæ. Φουδ εξ ου τρωγλοδοται. Syncellus, p. 4, " Many of them " paſſed inland, and peopled the Mediterranean country."

" In proceſs of time the ſons of *Chus* alſo, (after their expulſion " from Egypt) made ſettlements upon the ſea-coaſt of *Africa*, " and came into *Mauritania*. Hence we find traces of them alſo " in the names of places, ſuch as *Churis*, *Chuſares*, upon the coaſt: " and a river *Chuſa*, and a city *Cotta*, together with a promontory, " *Cotis*, in *Mauritania*, all denominated from *Chus*; who at differ- " ent times, and by different people, was called *Chus*, *Cuth*, *Coſh*, " and

of Cuſh or Phut; and that we ſhould ſhew farther, that but a ſingle remnant of Canaan, which was afterwards ruined, was ever in Africa at all.—Here all is conſternation.—

But unfortunately again for the argument, though wonderfully for the confirmation that the ſcriptures are of divine original, the whole prophecy has been completed. A part of the deſcendants of Canaan were hewers of wood and drawers of water, and became tributary and ſubject to the Iſraelites, or the deſcendants of Shem. The Greeks afterwards, as well as the Romans, who were both the deſcendants of Japhet, not only ſubdued thoſe who were ſettled in Sy-

" and *Cotis*. The river *Cuſa* is mentioned by *Pliny*, Lib. 5. c. 1. " and by *Ptolomy*."

" Many ages after theſe ſettlements, there was another eruption of the *Cuſhites* into theſe parts, under the name of *Saracens* " and *Moors*, who over-ran *Africa*, to the very extremity of Mount " Atlas. They paſſed over and conquered *Spain* to the north, and " they extended themſelves ſouthward, as I ſaid in my treatiſe, to " the rivers *Senegal* and *Gambia*, and as low as the *Gold Coaſt*. I " mentioned this, becauſe I do not think that they proceeded " much farther: moſt of the nations to the *ſouth* being, as I ima- " gine, of the race of *Phut*. The very country upon the river " *Gambia* on one ſide, is at this day called *Phuta*, of which *Bluet*, " in his hiſtory of *Juba Ben Solomon*, gives an account."

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ria and Paleſtine, but purſued and conquered all ſuch as were then remaining. Theſe were the Tyrians and Carthaginians: the former of whom were ruined by Alexander and the Greeks, the latter by Scipio and the Romans.

It appears then that the ſecond argument is wholly inapplicable and falſe: that it is falſe in its *application*, becauſe thoſe, who were the objects of the curſe, were a totally diſtinct people: that it is falſe in its *proof*, becauſe no ſuch diſtinguiſhing marks, as have been ſpecified, are to be found in the divine writings: and that, if the proof could be made out, it would be now *inapplicable*, as the curſe has been long completed.

With reſpect to the third argument, we muſt now ſuppoſe that the ſcriptures are falſe; that mankind did not all ſpring from the ſame original; that there are different ſpecies of men. Now what muſt we juſtly conclude from ſuch a ſuppoſition? Muſt we conclude that one ſpecies is inferior to another, and that the inferiority depends upon their *colour*, or their *features*, or their *form*? —No—We muſt now conſult the analogy

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of nature, and the concluſion will be this; "that as ſhe tempered the bodies of the different ſpecies of men in a different degree, to enable them to endure the reſpective climates of their habitation, ſo ſhe gave them a variety of colour and appearance with a like benevolent deſign."

To ſum up the whole. If the ſcriptures are true, it is evident that the poſterity of *Cain* are no more; that the curſe of *Ham* has been accompliſhed; and that, as all men were derived from the ſame ſtock, ſo this variety of appearance in men muſt either have proceeded from ſome interpoſition of the Deity, or from a co-operation of certain cauſes, which have an effect upon the human frame, and have the power of changing it more or leſs from its primitive appearance, as they happen to be more or leſs numerous or powerful than thoſe, which acted upon the frame of man in the firſt ſeat of his habitation. If from the interpoſition of the Deity, then we muſt conclude that he, who bringeth good out of evil, produced it for their convenience. If, from the co-operation of the cauſes before related,

lated, what argument may not be found againſt any ſociety of men, who ſhould happen to differ, in the points alluded to, from ourſelves?

If, on the other hand, the ſcriptures are falſe, then it is evident, that there was neither ſuch a perſon as *Cain*, nor *Ham*, nor *Canaan*; and that nature beſtowed ſuch colour, features, and form, upon the different ſpecies of men, as were beſt adapted to their ſituation.

Thus, on which ever ſuppoſition it is founded, the whole argument muſt fall. And indeed it is impoſſible that it can ſtand, even in the eye of common ſenſe. For if you admit the *form* of men as a juſtification of ſlavery, you may ſubjugate your own brother: if *features*, then you muſt quarrel with all the world: if *colour*, where are you to ſtop? It is evident that if you travel from the equator to the northern pole, you will find a regular gradation of colour from black to white. Now if you can juſtly take him for your ſlave, who is of the deepeſt die, what hinders you from taking him alſo, who only differs from the former but by a ſhade. Thus you may proceed

ceed, taking each in a regular ſucceſſion to the poles. But who are you, that thus take into ſlavery ſo many people? Where do you live yourſelf? Do you live in *Spain*, or in *France*, or in *Britain*? If in either of theſe countries, take care leſt the *whiter natives of the north* ſhould have a claim upon yourſelf.—But the argument is too ridiculous to be farther noticed.

Having now ſilenced the whole argument, we might immediately proceed to the diſcuſſion of other points, without even declaring our opinion as to which of the ſuppoſitions may be right, or which it has been refuted; but we do not think ourſelves at liberty to do this. The preſent age would rejoice to find that the ſcriptures had no foundation, and would anxiouſly catch at the writings of him, who ſhould mention them in a doubtful manner. We ſhall therefore declare our ſentiments, by aſſerting that they are true, and that all mankind, however various their appearance, are derived from the ſame ſtock.

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To prove this, we ſhall not produce thoſe innumerable arguments, by which the ſcriptures have ſtood the teſt of ages, but advert to a ſingle fact. It is an univerſal law, obſervable throughout the whole creation, *that if two animals of a different ſpecies propegate, their offſpring is unable to continue its own ſpecies.* By this admirable law, the different ſpecies are preſerved diſtinct; every poſſibility of confuſion is prevented, and the world is forbidden to be over-run by a race of monſters. Now, if we apply this law to thoſe of the human kind, who are ſaid to be of a diſtinct ſpecies from each other, it immediately fails. The *mulattoe* is as capable of continuing his own ſpecies as his father; a clear and irrefragable proof, that the † ſcripture account of the creation is true,

† When America was firſt diſcovered, it was thought by ſome, that the ſcripture account of the creation was falſe, and that there were different ſpecies of men, becauſe they could never ſuppoſe that people, in ſo rude a ſtate as the Americans, could have tranſported themſelves to that continent from any parts of the known world. This opinion however was refuted by the celebrated Captain Cooke, who ſhewed that the traject between the continents of Aſia and America, was as ſhort as ſome, which people in

true, and that "God, who hath made the "world, hath made of * one blood all the "nations of men that dwell on all the face "of the earth."

But if this be the caſe, it will be ſaid that mankind were originally of one colour; and it will be aſked at the ſame time, what it is probable that the colour was, and how they came to aſſume ſo various an appearance? To each of theſe we ſhall make that reply, which we conceive to be the moſt rational.

As mankind were originally of the ſame ſtock, ſo it is evident that they were originally of the ſame colour. But how ſhall we attempt to aſcertain it? Shall we *Engliſhmen* ſay, that it was the ſame as that which we now find to be peculiar to ourſelves?—No—

in as rude a ſtate have been actually known to paſs. This affords an excellent caution againſt an ill-judged and haſty cenſure of the divine writings, becauſe every difficulty which may be ſtarted, cannot be inſtantly cleared up.

* The divine writings, which aſſert that all men were derived from the *ſame ſtock*, ſhew alſo, in the ſame inſtance of *Caſh*, p. 180, that ſome of them had changed their original complexion.

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This would be a vain and partial conſideration, and would betray our judgment to have ariſen from that falſe fondneſs, which habituates us to ſuppoſe, that every thing belonging to ourſelves is the perfecteſt and the beſt. Add to this, that we ſhould always be liable to a juſt reproof from every inhabitant of the globe, whoſe colour was different from our own; becauſe he would juſtly ſay, that he had as good a right to imagine that his own was the primitive colour, as that of any other people.

How then ſhall we attempt to aſcertain it? Shall we look into the various climates of the earth, ſee the colour that generally prevails in the inhabitants of each, and apply the rule? This will be certainly free from partiality, and will afford us a better proſpect of ſucceſs: for as every particular diſtrict has its particular colour, ſo it is evident that the complexion of Noah and his ſons, from whom the reſt of the world were deſcended, was the ſame as that, which is peculiar to the country, which was the ſeat of their habita-

habitation. This, by ſuch a mode of deciſion, will be found a dark olive; a beautiful colour, and a juſt medium between white and black. That this was the primitive colour, is highly probable from the obſervations that have been made; and, if admitted, will afford a valuable leſſon to the Europeans, to be cautious how they deride thoſe of the oppoſite complexion, as there is great reaſon to preſume, *that the pureſt* * *white is as far removed from the primitive colour as the deepeſt black.*

We come now to the grand queſtion, which is, that if mankind were originally of this or any other colour, how came it to paſs, that they ſhould wear ſo various an appearance? We reply, as we have had occaſion to ſay before, either *by the interpoſition of the Deity*, or *by a co-operation of certain cauſes, which have an effect upon the human frame, and have the power of changing it more or leſs from its*

* The following are the grand colours diſcernible in mankind, between which there are many ſhades:

White, Brown — Olive — Copper, Black

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primitive appearance, as they are more or leſs numerous or powerful than thoſe, which acted upon the frame of man in the firſt ſeat of his habitation.

With reſpect to the Divine interpoſition, two epochs have been aſſigned, when this difference of colour has been imagined to have been ſo produced. The firſt is that, which has been related, when the curſe was pronounced on a branch of the poſterity of *Ham*. But this argument has been already refuted; for if the particular colour alluded to were aſſigned at this period, it was aſſigned to the deſcendants of *Canaan*, to diſtinguiſh them from thoſe of his other brothers, and was therefore *limited* to the former. But the deſcendants of * *Cuſh*, as we have ſhewn before, partook of the ſame colour; a clear proof that it was neither aſſigned to them on this occaſion, nor at this period.

The ſecond epoch is that, when mankind were diſperſed on the building of *Babel*. It

* See note, p. 180. To this we may add, that the reſt of the deſcendants of *Ham*, as far as they can be traced, are now alſo black, as well as many of the deſcendants of *Shem*.

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has been thought, that both *national features and colour* might probably have been given them at this time, because these would have assisted the confusion of language, by causing them to disperse into tribes, and would have united more firmly the individuals of each, after the dispersion had taken place. But this is improbable: first, because there is great reason to presume that Moses, who has mentioned the confusion of language, would have mentioned these circumstances also, if they had actually contributed to bring about so singular an event: secondly, because the confusion of language was sufficient of itself to have accomplished this; and we cannot suppose that the Deity could have done any thing in vain: and thirdly, because, if mankind had been dispersed, each tribe in its peculiar hue, it is impossible to conceive, that they could have wandered and settled in such a manner, as to exhibit that regular gradation of colour from the equator to the poles, so conspicuous at the present day.

These are the only periods, which there has been even the shadow of a probability for assigning;

ſigning; and we may therefore conclude that the preceding obſervations, together with ſuch circumſtances as will appear in the preſent chapter, will amount to a demonſtration, that the difference of colour was never cauſed by any interpoſition of the Deity, and that it muſt have proceeded therefore from that *incidental co-operation of cauſes*, which has been before related.

What theſe cauſes are, it is out of the power of human wiſdom poſitively to aſſert: there are facts, however, which, if properly weighed and put together, will throw conſiderable light upon the ſubject. Theſe we ſhall ſubmit to the peruſal of the reader, and ſhall deduce from them ſuch inferences only, as almoſt every perſon muſt make in his own mind, on their recital.

The firſt point that occurs to be aſcertained, is, "What part of the ſkin is the ſeat of co-"lour?" The old anatomiſts uſually divided the ſkin into two parts, or lamina; the exterior and thinneſt, called by the Greeks *Epidermis*, by the Romans *Cuticula*, and hence by us *Cuticle*; and the interior, called by the former

Derma, and by the latter *Cutis*, or *true ſkin*. Hence they muſt neceſſarily have ſuppoſed, that, as the *true ſkin* was in every reſpect the ſame in all human ſubjects, however various their external hue, ſo the ſeat of colour muſt have exiſted in the *Cuticle*, or upper ſurface.

Malphigi, an eminent Italian phyſician, of the laſt century, was the firſt perſon who diſcovered that the ſkin was divided into three lamina, or parts; the *Cuticle*, the *true ſkin*, and a certain coagulated ſubſtance ſituated between both, which he diſtinguiſhed by the title of *Mucoſum Corpus*; a title retained by anatomiſts to the preſent day: which coagulated ſubſtance adhered ſo firmly to the *Cuticle*, as, in all former anatomical preparations, to have come off with it, and from this circumſtance, to have led the ancient anatomiſts to believe, that there were but two lamina, or diviſible portions in the human ſkin.

This diſcovery was ſufficient to aſcertain the point in queſtion: for it appeared afterwards that the *Cuticle*, when divided according to this diſcovery from the other lamina, was ſemi-tranſparent; that the cuticle of the blackeſt

blackeſt negroe was of the ſame tranſparency and colour, as that of the pureſt white; and hence, the *true ſkins* of both being invariably the ſame, that the *mucoſum corpus* was the ſeat of colour.

This has been farther confirmed by all ſubſequent anatomical experiments, by which it appears, that, whatever is the colour of this intermediate coagulated ſubſtance, nearly the ſame is the apparent colour of the upper ſurface of the ſkin. Neither can it be otherwiſe; for the *Cuticle*, from its tranſparency, muſt neceſſarily tranſmit the colour of the ſubſtance beneath it, in the ſame manner, though not in the ſame degree, as the *cornea* tranſmits the colour of the *iris* of the eye. This tranſparency is a matter of ocular demonſtration in white people. It is conſpicuous in every bluſh; for no one can imagine, that the cuticle becomes red as often as this happens: nor is it leſs diſcoverable in the veins, which are ſo eaſy to be diſcerned; for no one can ſuppoſe, that the blue ſtreaks, which he conſtantly ſees in the faireſt complexions, are painted, as it were, on the ſurface of the upper ſkin. From

theſe, and a variety of other * obſervations, no maxim is more true in phyſiology, than that *on the mucoſum corpus depends the colour of the human body*; or, in other words, that the *mucoſum corpus* being of a different colour in different inhabitants of the globe, and appearing through the cuticle or upper ſurface of the ſkin, gives them that various appearance, which ſtrikes us ſo forcibly in contemplating the human race.

As this can be incontrovertibly aſcertained, it is evident, that whatever cauſes co-operate in producing this different appearance, they produce it by acting upon the *mucoſum corpus*, which, from the almoſt incredible manner in which the † cuticle is perforated, is as ac-

* Diſeaſes have a great effect upon the *mucoſum corpus*, but particularly the jaundice, which turns it yellow. Hence, being tranſmitted through the cuticle, the yellow appearance of the whole body. But this, even as a matter of ocular demonſtration, is not confined ſolely to white people; negroes themſelves, while affected with theſe or other diſorders, changing their black colour for that which the diſeaſe has conveyed to the *mucous* ſubſtance.

† The cutaneous pores are ſo exceſſively ſmall, that one grain of ſand, (according to Dr. Lewenhoeck's calculations) would cover many hundreds of them.

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ceſſible as the cuticle itſelf. Theſe cauſes are probably thoſe various qualities of things, which, combined with the influence of the ſun, contribute to form what we call *climate*. For when any perſon conſiders, that the mucous ſubſtance before-mentioned, is found to vary in its colour, as the *climates* vary from the equator to the poles, his mind muſt be inſtantly ſtruck with the hypotheſis, and he muſt adopt it without any heſitation, as the genuine cauſe of the phænomenon.

This fact, * *of the variation of the mucous ſubſtance according to the ſituation of the place*, has been clearly aſcertained in the numerous anatomical experiments that have been made; in which, ſubjects of all nations have come under conſideration... The natives of many of the kingdoms and iſles of *Aſia*, are found to have their *corpus mucoſum* black. Thoſe of *Africa*, ſituated near the line, of the ſame colour. Thoſe of the maritime parts of the ſame continent, of a duſky brown, nearly approach-

* We do not mean to inſinuate that the ſame people have their *corpus mucoſum* ſenſibly vary, as often as they go into another latitude, but that the fact is true only of different people, who have been long eſtabliſhed in different latitudes.

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ing to it; and the colour becomes lighter or darker in proportion as the diſtance from the equator is either greater or leſs. The Europeans are the faireſt inhabitants of the world. Thoſe ſituated in the moſt ſouthern regions of *Europe*, have in their *corpus mucoſum* a tinge of the dark hue of their *African* neighbours; hence the epidemic complexion, prevalent among them, is nearly of the colour of the pickled Spaniſh olive; while, in this country, and thoſe ſituated nearer the north pole, it appears to be nearly, if not abſolutely, white.

Theſe are * facts, which anatomy has eſtabliſhed; and we acknowledge them to be ſuch, that we cannot diveſt ourſelves of the idea, that *climate* has a conſiderable ſhare in producing a difference of colour. Others, we know, have invented other hypotheſes, but all of them have been inſtantly refuted, as unable to explain the difficulties for which they were advanced, and as abſolutely contrary to fact: and the inventors themſelves have been oblig-

* We beg leave to return our thanks here to a gentleman, eminent in the medical line, who furniſhed us with the above-mentioned facts.

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ed, almoſt as ſoon as they have propoſed them, to acknowledge them deficient.

The only objection of any conſequence that has ever been made to the hypotheſis of *climate*, is this, *that people under the ſame parallels are not exactly of the ſame colour*. But this is no objection in fact: for it does not follow that thoſe countries, which are at an equal diſtance from the equator, ſhould have their climates the ſame. Indeed nothing is more contrary to experience than this. Climate depends upon a variety of accidents. High mountains, in the neighbourhood of a place, make it cooler, by chilling the air that is carried over them by the winds. Large ſpreading ſucculent plants, if among the productions of the ſoil, have the ſame effect: they afford agreeable cooling ſhades, and a moiſt atmoſphere from their continual exhalations, by which the ardour of the ſun is conſiderably abated. While the ſoil, on the other hand, if of a ſandy nature, retains the heat in an uncommon degree, and makes the ſummers conſiderably hotter than thoſe which are found to exiſt in the ſame latitude, where the ſoil is different.

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To this proximity of what may be termed *burning ſands*, and to the ſulphurous and metallic particles, which are continually exhaling from the bowels of the earth, is aſcribed the different degree of blackneſs, by which ſome *African* nations are diſtinguiſhable from each other, though under the ſame parallels. To theſe obſervations we may add, that though the inhabitants of the ſame parallel are not exactly of the ſame hue, yet they differ only by ſhades of the ſame colour; or, to ſpeak with more preciſion, that there are no two people, in ſuch a ſituation, one of whom is white, and the other black. To ſum up the whole—Suppoſe we were to take a common globe; to begin at the equator; to paint every country along the meridian line in ſucceſſion from thence to the poles; and to paint them with the ſame colour which prevails in the reſpective inhabitants of each, we ſhould ſee the black, with which we had been obliged to begin, inſenſibly changing to an olive, and the olive, through as many intermediate colours, to a white: and if, on the other hand, we ſhould complete any one of the parallels accor-

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ding to the ſame plan, we ſhould ſee a difference perhaps in the appearance of ſome of the countries through which it ran, though the difference would conſiſt wholly in ſhades of the ſame colour.

The argument therefore, which is brought againſt the hypotheſis, is ſo far from being an objection, that we ſhall conſider it as one of the firſt arguments in its favour: for if *climate* has really an influence on the *mucous ſubſtance* of the body, it is evident, that we muſt not only expect to ſee a gradation of colour in the inhabitants from the equator to the poles, but alſo different ſhades of the ſame colour in the inhabitants of the ſame parallel.

To this argument, we ſhall add one that is incontrovertible, which is, that when the *black* inhabitants of *Africa* are tranſplanted to *colder*,

* Suppoſe we were to ſee two nations, contiguous to each other, of black and white inhabitants in the ſame parallel, even this would be no objection, for many circumſtances are to be conſidered. A black people may have wandered into a white, and a white people into a black latitude, and they may not have been ſettled there a ſufficient length of time for ſuch a change to have been accompliſhed in their complexion, as that they ſhould be like the old eſtabliſhed inhabitants of the parallel, into which they have lately come.

or the *white* inhabitants of *Europe* to *hotter* climates, their children, *born there*, are of a *different colour from themſelves*; that is, lighter in the firſt, and darker in the ſecond inſtance.

As a proof of the firſt, we ſhall give the words of the Abbé Raynal, in his admired publication.——* "The children," ſays he, "which they (the *Africans*) procreate in *America*, are not ſo black as their parents were. "After each generation the difference becomes more palpable. It is poſſible, that "after a numerous ſucceſſion of generations, "the men come from *Africa* would not be "diſtinguiſhed from thoſe of the country "into which they may have been tranſplanted."

This circumſtance we have had the pleaſure of hearing confirmed by a variety of perſons, who have been witneſſes of the fact; but particularly by many † intelligent Africans, who

* Juſtamond's Abbé Raynal, v. 5. p. 193.

† The author of this Eſſay made it his buſineſs to inquire of the moſt intelligent of thoſe, whom he could meet with in London, as to the authenticity of the fact. All thoſe from *America* aſſured him that it was ſtrictly true; thoſe from the Weſt-Indies, that

who have been parents themſelves in *America*, and who have declared that the difference is ſo palpable in the *northern Provinces*, that not only they themſelves have conſtantly obſerved it, but that they have heard it obſerved by others.

Neither is this variation in the children from the colour of their parents improbable. *The children of the blackeſt Africans are born* white.* In this ſtate they continue for about a month, when they change to a pale yellow. In proceſs of time they become brown. Their ſkin ſtill continues to increaſe in darkneſs with their age, till it becomes of a dirty, ſallow black, and at length, after a certain period of years, gloſſy and ſhining. Now, if climate has any influence on the *mucous ſubſtance* of the body, this variation in the children from the co-

that they had never obſerved it there; but that they had found a ſenſible difference in themſelves ſince they came to England.

* This circumſtance, which always happens, ſhews that they are deſcended from the ſame parents as ourſelves; for had they been a diſtinct ſpecies of men, and the blackneſs entirely ingrafted in their conſtitution and frame, there is great reaſon to preſume that their children would have been born *black*.

lour

lour of their parents is an event which muſt be reaſonably expected: for being born white, and not having equally powerful cauſes to act upon them in colder, as their parents had in the hotter climates which they left, it muſt neceſſarily follow, that the ſame effect cannot poſſibly be produced.

Hence alſo, if the hypotheſis be admitted, may be deduced the reaſon, why even thoſe children, who have been brought from their country at an early age into colder regions, have been * obſerved to be of a lighter colour than thoſe who have remained at home till they arrived at a ſtate of manhood. For having undergone ſome of the changes which we mentioned to have attended their countrymen from infancy to a certain age, and having been taken away before the reſt could be completed, theſe farther changes, which would have taken place had they remained at home, ſeem either to have been checked in their progreſs, or weakened in their degree, by a colder climate.

* This obſervation was communicated to us by the gentleman in the medical line, to whom we returned our thanks for certain anatomical facts.

We

We come now to the ſecond and oppoſite caſe; for a proof of which we ſhall appeal to the words of Dr. Mitchell, in the Philoſophical Tranſactions.* "The *Spaniards* who have "inhabited *America* under the torrid zone for "any time, are become as dark coloured as "our native *Indians* of *Virginia*, of which, "*I myſelf have been a witneſs*; and were they "not to intermarry with the *Europeans*, but "lead the ſame rude and barbarous lives with "the *Indians*, it is very probable that, in a ſuc-"ceſſion of many generations, they would "become as dark in complexion."

To this inſtance we ſhall add one, which is mentioned by a ‡ late writer, who deſcribing the *African* coaſt, and the *European* ſettlements there, has the following paſſage. "There are ſeveral other ſmall *Portugueſe* "ſettlements, and one of ſome note at *Mi-*"*tomba*, a river in *Sierra Leon*. The peo-"ple here called *Portugueſe*, are principally "perſons bred from a mixture of the firſt

* Philoſ. Tranſ. No. 476. ſect. 4.

‡ Treatiſe upon the Trade from Great Britain to Africa, by an African merchant.

"*Portu-*

"*Portugueſe diſcoverers* with the natives, "and now become, in their *complexion* and "*woolly quality* of their hair, *perfect negroes*, "retaining however a ſmattering of the *Por-* "*tugueſe* language."

Theſe facts, with reſpect to the coloniſts of the *Europeans*, are of the higheſt importance in the preſent caſe, and deſerve a ſerious attention. For when we know to a certainty from whom they are deſcended; when we know that they were, at the time of their tranſplantation, of the ſame colour as thoſe from whom they ſeverally ſprung; and when, on the other hand, we are credibly informed, that they have changed it for the native colour of the place which they now inhabit; the evidence in ſupport of theſe facts is as great as if a perſon, on the removal of two or three families into another climate, had determined to aſcertain the circumſtance; as if he had gone with them and watched their children; as if he had communicated his obſervations at his death to a ſucceſſor; as if his ſucceſſor had proſecuted the plan, and thus an uninterrupted chain of evidence had been kept up

from

from their firſt removal to any determined period of ſucceeding time.

But though theſe facts ſeem ſufficient of themſelves to confirm our opinion, they are not the only facts which can be adduced in its ſupport. It can be ſhewn, that the members of the *very ſame family*, when divided from each other, and removed into different countries, have not only changed their family complexion, but that they have changed it to *as many different colours* as they have gone into *different regions of the world.* We cannot have, perhaps, a more ſtriking inſtance of this, than in the *Jews.* Theſe people are ſcattered over the face of the whole earth. They have preſerved themſelves diſtinct from the reſt of the world by their religion; and, as they never intermarry with any but thoſe of their own ſect, ſo they have no mixture of blood in their veins, that they ſhould differ from each other: and yet nothing is more true, than that the * *Engliſh Jew* is white, the *Portugueſe*

* We mean ſuch only as are *natives* of the countries which we mention, and whoſe anceſtors have been ſettled there for a certain period of time.

tugueſe ſwarthy, the *Armenian* olive, and the *Arabian* copper; in ſhort, that there appear to be as many different ſpecies of *Jews* as there are countries in which they reſide.

To theſe facts we ſhall add the following obſervation; that if we can give credit to the ancient hiſtorians in general, a change from the darkeſt black to the pureſt white muſt have actually been accompliſhed. One inſtance, perhaps, may be thought ſufficient. * *Herodotus* relates, that the *Colchi were black*, and that they had *criſped hair*. Theſe people were a detachment of the *Æthiopian* army under *Seſoſtris*, who followed him in his expedition, and ſettled in thatp art of the world, where *Colchis* is uſually repreſented to have been ſituated. Had not the ſame author informed us of this circumſtance, we ſhould have thought it † ſtrange, that a people of this deſcription ſhould have been found in ſuch a

* Herodotus. Euterpe. p. 80. Editio Stephani, printed 1570.

† This circumſtance confirms what we ſaid in a former note, p. 201, that even if two nations were to be found in the ſame parallel, one of whom was black, and the other white, it would form no objection againſt the hypotheſis of climate, as one of them might have been new ſettlers from a diſtant country.

latitude,

latitude. Now, as they were undoubtedly ſettled there, and as they were neither ſo totally deſtroyed, nor made any ſuch rapid conqueſts, as that hiſtory ſhould notice the event, there is great reaſon to preſume, that their deſcendants continued in the ſame, or ſettled in the adjacent country; from whence it will follow, that they muſt have changed their complexion to that, which is obſervable in the inhabitants of this particular region at the preſent day; or, in other words, that the *black inhabitant of Colchis* muſt have been changed into the * *fair Circaſſian.*

As we have now ſhewn it to be highly probable, from the facts which have been advanced, that climate is the cauſe of the difference of colour which prevails in the different inhabitants of the globe, we ſhall now ſhew its probability from ſo ſimilar an effect pro-

* Suppoſe, without the knowledge of any hiſtorian, they had made ſuch conſiderable conqueſts, as to have ſettled themſelves at the diſtance of 1000 miles in any one direction from *Colchis*, ſtill they muſt have changed their colour. For had they gone in an Eaſtern or Weſtern direction, they muſt have been of the ſame colour as the *Circaſſians*; if to the north, whiter; if to the ſouth, of a copper. There are no people within that diſtance of *Colchis*, who are black.

duced on the *mucous ſubſtanee* before-mentioned by ſo ſimilar a cauſe, that though the fact does not abſolutely prove our conjecture to be right, yet it will give us a very lively conception of the manner in which the phænomenon may be cauſed.

This probability may be ſhewn in the caſe of *freckles*, which are to be ſeen in the face of children, but of ſuch only, as have the thinneſt and moſt tranſparent ſkins, and are occaſioned by the rays of the ſun ſtriking forcibly on the *mucous ſubſtance* of the face, and drying the accumulating fluid. This accumulating fluid, or perſpirable matter, is at firſt colourleſs; but being expoſed to violent heat, or dried, becomes brown. Hence, the *mucoſum corpus* being tinged in various parts by this brown coagulated fluid, and the parts ſo tinged appearing through the *cuticle*, or upper ſurface of the ſkin, ariſes that ſpotted appearance obſervable in the caſe recited.

Now, if we were to conceive a black ſkin to be an *univerſal freckle*, or the rays of the ſun to act ſo univerſally on the *mucous ſubſtance* of a perſon's face, as to produce theſe

ſpots

ſpots ſo contiguous to each other that they ſhould unite, we ſhould then ſee, in imagination, a face ſimilar to thoſe, which are daily to be ſeen among black people: and if we were to conceive his body to be expoſed or acted upon in the ſame manner, we ſhould then ſee his body aſſuming a ſimilar appearance; and thus we ſhould ſee the whole man of a perfect black, or reſembling one of the naked inhabitants of the torrid zone. Now as the ſeat of freckles and of blackneſs is the ſame; as their appearance is ſimilar; and as the cauſe of the firſt is the ardour of the ſun, it is therefore probable that the cauſe of the ſecond is the ſame: hence, if we ſubſtitute for the word "*ſun*," what is analogous to it, the word *climate*, the ſame effect may be ſuppoſed to be produced, and the conjecture to receive a ſanction.

Nor is it unlikely that the hypotheſis, which conſiders the cauſe of freckles and of blackneſs as the ſame, may be right. For if blackneſs is occaſioned by the rays of the ſun ſtriking forcibly and univerſally on the *mucous ſubſtance* of the body, and drying the accu-

mulating fluid, we can account for the different degrees of it to be found in the different inhabitants of the globe. For as the quantity of perſpirable fluid, and the force of the ſolar rays is ſucceſſively increaſed, as the climates are ſucceſſively warmer, from any given parallel to the line, it follows that the fluid, with which the *mucous ſubſtance* will be ſtained, will be ſucceſſively thicker and deeper coloured; and hence, as it appears through the cuticle, the complexion ſucceſſively darker; or, what amounts to the ſame thing, there will be a difference of colour in the inhabitants of every ſucceſſive parallel.

From theſe, and the whole of the preceding obſervations on the ſubject, we may conclude, that as all the inhabitants of the earth cannot be otherwiſe than the children of the ſame parents, and as the difference of their appearance muſt have of courſe proceeded from incidental cauſes, theſe cauſes are a combination of thoſe qualities, which we call *climate*; that the blackneſs of the *Africans* is ſo far ingrafted in their conſtitution, in a courſe of many

many generations, that their children wholly inherit it, if brought up in the ſame ſpot, but that it is not ſo abſolutely interwoven in their nature, that it cannot be removed, if they are born and ſettled in another; that *Noah* and his ſons were probably of an *olive* complexion; that thoſe of their deſcendants, who went farther to the ſouth, became of a deeper olive or *copper*; while thoſe, who went ſtill farther, became of a deeper copper or *black*; that thoſe, on the other hand, who travelled farther to the north, became leſs olive or *brown*, while thoſe who went ſtill farther than the former became leſs brown or *white*; and that if any man were to point out any one of the colours which prevails in the human complexion, as likely to furniſh an argument, that the people of ſuch a complexion were of a different ſpecies from the reſt, it is probable that his own deſcendants, if removed to the climate to which this complexion is peculiar, would, in the courſe of a few generations, degenerate into the ſame colour.

Having now replied to the argument, "that "the Africans are an inferior link of the chain "of

" of nature," as far as it depended on their *capacity* and *colour*, we ſhall now only take notice of an expreſſion, which the *receivers* before-mentioned are pleaſed to make uſe of, " that they are made for ſlavery."

Had the Africans been *made for ſlavery*, or to become the property of any ſociety of men, it is clear, from the obſervations that have been made in the ſecond part of this Eſſay, that they muſt have been created *devoid of reaſon:* but this is contrary to fact. It is clear alſo, that there muſt have been many and evident ſigns of the *inferiority of their nature*, and that this ſociety of men muſt have had a *natural right* to their dominion: but this is equally falſe. No ſuch ſigns of *inferiority* are to be found in the one, and the right to dominion in the other is *incidental:* for in what volume of nature or religion is it written, that one ſociety of men ſhould *breed ſlaves* for the benefit of another? Nor is it leſs evident that they would have wanted many of thoſe qualities which they have, and which brutes have not: they would have wanted that *ſpi-*

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rit of liberty, that * *ſenſe of ignominy and ſhame*, which ſo frequently drives them to the horrid extremity of finiſhing their own exiſtence.—Nor would they have been endowed with a *contemplative power*; for ſuch a power would have been unneceſſary to people in ſuch a ſituation; or rather, its only uſe could have been to increaſe their pain. We cannot ſuppoſe therefore that God has made an order of beings, with ſuch mental qualities and powers, for the ſole purpoſe of being uſed as *beaſts*, or *inſtruments* of labour. And here, what a dreadful argument preſents itſelf againſt you *receivers*? For if they have no underſtandings, as you confeſs, then is your conduct impious, becauſe, as they cannot perceive the intention of your puniſhment, your ſeverities cannot make them better. But if, on the other hand, they have had underſtandings, (which has evidently appeared) then is your conduct equally impious, who, by deſtroying their faculties by

* There are a particular people among thoſe tranſported from Africa to the colonies, who immediately on receiving puniſhment, deſtroy themſelves. This is a fact which the *receivers* are unable to contradict.

the

the ſeverity of your diſcipline, have reduced men, who had once the power of reaſon, to an equality with the brute creation.

CHAP. IX.

THE reader may perhaps think, that the *receivers* have by this time expended all their arguments, but their ſtore is not ſo eaſily exhauſted. They are well aware that juſtice, nature, and religion, will continue, as they have ever uniformly done, to oppoſe their conduct. This has driven them to exert their ingenuity, and has occaſioned that mutiplicity of arguments to be found in the preſent queſtion.

Theſe arguments are of a different complexion from the former. They conſiſt in comparing the ſtate of *ſlaves* with that of ſome of the claſſes of *free* men, and in certain ſcenes of felicity, which the former are ſaid to enjoy.

It is affirmed that the puniſhments which the Africans undergo, are leſs ſevere than the military; that their life is happier than that of the Engliſh peaſant; that they have the advan-

advantages of manumiſſion; that they have their little ſpots of ground, their holydays, their dances; in ſhort, that their life is a ſcene of feſtivity and mirth, and that they are much happier in the colonies than in their own country.

Theſe repreſentations, which have been made out with much ingenuity and art, may have had their weight with the unwary; but they will never paſs with men of conſideration and ſenſe, who are accuſtomed to eſtimate the probability of things, before they admit them to be true. Indeed the bare aſſertion, that their ſituation is even comfortable, contains its own refutation, or at leaſt leads us to ſuſpect that the perſon, who aſſerted it, has omitted ſome important conſiderations in the account.—Such we ſhall ſhew to have been actually the caſe, and that the repreſentations of the *receivers*, when ſtripped of their gloſſy ornaments, are but empty declamation.

It is ſaid, firſt, of *military puniſhments*, that they are more ſevere than thoſe which the *Africans* undergo. But this is a bare aſſertion without a proof. It is not ſhewn even by thoſe,

thoſe, who aſſert it, how the fact can be made out. We are left therefore to draw the compariſon ourſelves, and to fill up thoſe important conſiderations, which we have juſt ſaid that the *receivers* had omitted.

That military puniſhments are ſevere we confeſs, but we deny that they are ſeverer than thoſe with which they are compared. Where is the military man whoſe ears have been ſlit, whoſe limbs have been mutilated, or whoſe eyes have been beaten out? But let us even allow, that their puniſhments are equal in the degree of their ſeverity; ſtill they muſt loſe by compariſon. The ſoldier is never puniſhed but after a fair and equitable trial, and the deciſion of a military court; the unhappy African, at the diſcretion of his Lord. The one* knows what particular conduct will conſtitute an offence; the other has no ſuch information, as he is wholly at the diſpoſal of paſſion and caprice, which may impoſe upon

* The articles of war are frequently read at the head of every regiment in the ſervice, ſtating thoſe particular actions which are to be conſidered as crimes.

any

any action, however laudable, the appellation of a crime. The former has it of courſe in his power to avoid a puniſhment; the latter is never ſafe. The former is puniſhed for a real, the latter, often, for an imaginary fault.

Now will any perſon aſſert, on comparing the whole of thoſe circumſtances together, which relate to their reſpective puniſhments, that there can be any doubt, which of the two are in the worſt ſituation, as to their penal ſyſtems?

With reſpect to the declaration, that the life of an *African* in the colonies is happier than that of an *Engliſh* peaſant, it is equally falſe. Indeed we can ſcarcely withhold our indignation, when we conſider how ſhamefully the ſituation of this latter claſs of men has been miſrepreſented, to elevate the former to a ſtate of fictitious happineſs. If the repreſentations of the *receivers* be true, it is evident that thoſe of the moſt approved writers, who have placed a conſiderable ſhare of happineſs in the *cottage*, have been miſtaken in their opinion; and that thoſe of the rich,

rich, who have been heard to ſigh, and envy the felicity of the *peaſant*, have been treacherous to their own ſenſations.

But which are we to believe on the occaſion? Thoſe who endeavour to dreſs *vice* in the habit of *virtue*, or thoſe who derive their opinion from their own feelings? The latter are ſurely to be believed; and we may conclude therefore, that the horrid picture which is given of the life of the *peaſant*, has not ſo juſt a foundation as the *receivers* would lead us to ſuppoſe. For has he no pleaſure in the thought, that he lives in his *own country*, and among his relations and friends? That he is actually *free*, and that his children will be the ſame? That he can never be *ſold* as a beaſt? That he can ſpeak his mind *without the fear of the laſh*? That he cannot even be ſtruck *with impunity*? And that he partakes, equally with his ſuperiors, of the *protection of the law*? —Now, there is no one of theſe advantages which the *African* poſſeſſes, and no one which the defenders of ſlavery take into their account.

Of

Of the other compariſons that are uſually made, we may obſerve in general, that, as they conſiſt in comparing the iniquitous practice of ſlavery with other iniquitous practices in force among other nations, they can neither raiſe it to the appearance of virtue, nor extenuate its guilt. The things compared are in theſe inſtances both of them evils alike. They call equally for redreſs, and are equally diſgraceful to the * governments which ſuffer them, if not encourage them, to exiſt. To attempt therefore to juſtify one ſpecies of iniquity, by comparing it with another, is no juſtification at all; and is ſo far from anſwering the purpoſe, for which the compariſon is intended, as to give us reaſon to ſuſpect that the *comparer*

* We cannot omit here to mention one of the cuſtoms, which has been often brought as a palliation of ſlavery, and which prevailed but a little time ago, and we are doubtful whether it does not prevail now, in the metropolis of this country, of kidnapping men for the ſervice of the Eaſt-India Company. Every ſubject, as long as he behaves well, has a right to the protection of government; and the tacit permiſſion of ſuch a ſcene of iniquity, when it becomes known, is as much a breach of duty in government, as the conduct of thoſe ſubjects, who, on other occaſions, would be termed, and puniſhed as, rebellious.

has

has but little notion either of equity or honour.

We come now to thoſe ſcenes of felicity, which ſlaves are ſaid to enjoy. The firſt advantage which they are ſaid to experience, is that of *manumiſſion*. But here the advocates for ſlavery conceal an important circumſtance. They expatiate indeed on the charms of freedom, and contend that it muſt be a bleſſing in the eyes of thoſe, upon whom it is conferred. We perfectly agree with them in this particular. But they do not tell us that theſe advantages are *confined*; that they are confined to ſome *favourite domeſtic*; that not *one in an hundred* enjoy them; and that they are *never* extended to thoſe, who are employed in the *cultivation of the field*, as long as they can work. Theſe are they, who are moſt to be pitied, who are deſtined to *perpetual* drudgery: and of whom *no one whatever* has a chance of being freed from his ſituation, till death either releaſes him at once, or age renders him incapable of continuing his former labour. And here let

let it be remarked, *to the diſgrace of the receivers*, that he is then made free, not——*as a reward for his paſt ſervices*, but, as his labour is then of little or no value——*to ſave the* * *tax.*

With the ſame artifice is mention alſo made of the little ſpots, or *gardens*, as they are called, which ſlaves are ſaid to poſſeſs from the *liberality* of *the receivers.* But people muſt not be led away by agreeable and pleaſant ſounds. They muſt not ſuppoſe that theſe gardens are made for *flowers*; or that they are places of *amuſement*, in which they can ſpend their time in botanical reſearches and delights. Alas, they do not furniſh them with a theme for ſuch pleaſing purſuits and ſpeculations! They muſt be cultivated in thoſe hours which ought to be

* The expences of every pariſh are defrayed by a poll-tax on negroes, to ſave which they pretend to liberate thoſe who are paſt labour; but they ſtill keep them employed in repairing fences, or in doing ſome trifling work, on a ſcanty allowance. For to free a *field-negree*, ſo long as he can work, is a maxim, which, notwithſtanding the numerous boaſted manumiſſions, no maſter *ever thinks of adopting* in the colonies.

appropriated

appropriated to ‖ reſt; and they muſt be cultivated, not for an amuſement, but to make up, *if it be poſſible*, the great deficiency in their weekly allowance of proviſions. Hence it appears, that the *receivers* have no merit whatever in ſuch an appropriation of land to their unfortunate ſlaves: for they are either under they neceſſity of doing this or of *loſing* them by the jaws of famine. And it is a notorious fact, that, with their weekly allowance, and the produce of their ſpots together, it is often with the greateſt difficulty that they preſerve a wretched exiſtence.

The third advantage which they are ſaid to experience, is that of *holy-days*, or days of reſpite from their uſual diſcipline and fatigue. This is certainly a great indulgence, and ought to be recorded to the immortal honour of the *receivers*. We wiſh we could expreſs their liberality in thoſe handſome

‖ They muſt be cultivated always on a *Sunday*, and frequently in thoſe hours which ſhould be appropriated to *ſleep*, or the wretched poſſeſſors muſt be inevitably *ſtarved*.

terms,

terms, in which it deſerves to be repreſented, or applaud them ſufficiently for deviating for once from the rigours of ſervile diſcipline. But we confeſs that we are unequal to the taſk, and muſt therefore content ourſelves with obſerving, that while the horſe has *one* day in *ſeven* to refreſh his limbs, the happy *African* has but *one* in * *fifty-two*, as a relaxation from his labours.

With reſpect to their *dances*, on which ſuch a particular ſtreſs has been generally laid, we fear that people may have been as ſhamefully deceived, as in the former inſtances. For from the manner in which theſe are generally mentioned, we ſhould almoſt be led to imagine, that they had certain hours allowed them for the purpoſe of joining in the dance,

* They are allowed in general three holy-days at Chriſtmas, but in Jamaica they have two alſo at Eaſter, and two at Whitſuntide: ſo that on the largeſt ſcale, they have only ſeven days in a year, or one day in fifty-two. But this is on a ſuppoſition, that the receivers do not break in upon the afternoons, which they are frequently too apt to do. If it ſhould be ſaid that Sunday is an holy-day, it is not true; it is ſo far an holy-day, that they do not work for their maſters; but ſuch an holy-day, that if they do not employ it in the cultivation of their little ſpots, they muſt be *ſtarved*.

and that they had every comfort and convenience, that people are generally ſuppoſed to enjoy on ſuch convivial occaſions. But this is far from the caſe. Reaſon informs us, that it can never be. If they wiſh for ſuch innocent recreations, they muſt enjoy them in the time that is allotted them for ſleep; and ſo far are theſe dances from proceeding from any uncommon degree of happineſs, which excites them to convivial ſociety, that they proceed rather from an uncommon depreſſion of ſpirits, which makes them even ſacrifice their * reſt, for the ſake of experiencing for a moment a more joyful oblivion of their cares. For ſuppoſe any one of the *receivers*, in the middle of a dance, were to addreſs his ſlaves in the following manner: "*Africans!* I begin at laſt "to feel for your ſituation; and my conſci-"ence is ſeverely hurt, whenever I reflect that "I have been reducing thoſe to a ſtate of mi-

* Theſe dances are uſually in the middle of the night; and ſo deſirous are theſe unfortunate people of obtaining but a joyful hour, that they not only often give up their ſleep, but add to the labours of the day, by going ſeveral miles to obtain it.

"ſery

" ſery and pain, who have never given me " offence. You ſeem to be fond of theſe " exerciſes, but yet you are obliged to take " them at ſuch unſeaſonable hours, that they " impair your health, which is ſufficiently " broken by the intolerable ſhare of labour " which I have hitherto impoſed upon you. " I will therefore make you a propoſal.— " Will you be content to live in the colonies, " and you ſhall have the half of every week " entirely to yourſelves? or will you chooſe " to return to your miſerable, wretched coun- " try?"——But what is that which ſtrikes their ears? Which makes them motionleſs in an inſtant? Which interrupts the feſtive ſcene?——their country?——tranſporting ſound!——Behold! they are now flying from the dance: you may ſee them running to the ſhore, and frantic as it were with joy, demanding with open arms an inſtantaneous paſſage to their beloved native plains.

Such are the *colonial delights*, by the repreſentation of which the *receivers* would perſuade us, that the *Africans* are taken from

their country to a region of conviviality and mirth; and that like thoſe, who leave their uſual places of reſidence for a ſummer's amuſement, they are conveyed to the colonies —*to bathe—to dance—to keep holy-day—to be jovial.*——But there is ſomething ſo truly ridiculous in the attempt to impoſe theſe ſcenes of felicity on the public, as ſcenes which fall to the lot of ſlaves, that the *receivers* muſt have been driven to great extremities, to hazard them to the eye of cenſure.

The laſt point that remains to be conſidered, is the ſhameful aſſertion, that the *Africans* are much *happier in the colonies than in their own country.* But in what does this ſuperior happineſs conſiſt? In thoſe real ſcenes, it muſt be replied, which have been juſt mentioned; for theſe, by the confeſſion of the receivers, conſtitute the happineſs they enjoy. —But it has been ſhewn that theſe have been unfairly repreſented; and, were they realized in the moſt extenſive latitude, they would not confirm the fact. For if, upon a recapitulation, it conſiſts in the pleaſure of *manu-*

miſſion,

miſſion, *they* ſurely muſt have paſſed their lives in a much more comfortable manner, who, like the *Africans at home*, have had no occaſion for ſuch a benefit at all. But the *receivers*, we preſume, reaſon upon this principle, that we never know the value of a bleſſing but by its loſs. This is generally true: but would any one of them make himſelf a *ſlave* for years, that he might run the chance of the pleaſures of *manumiſſion*? Or that he might taſte the charms of liberty with *a greater reliſh*? Nor is the aſſertion leſs falſe in every other conſideration. For if their happineſs conſiſts in the few *holy-days*, which *in the colonies* they are permitted to enjoy, what muſt be their ſituation *in their own country*, where the whole year is but one continued holy-day, or ceſſation from diſcipline and fatigue?—If in the poſſeſſion *of a mean and contracted ſpot*, what muſt be their ſituation, where a whole region is their own, producing almoſt ſpontaneouſly the comforts of life, and requiring for its cultivation none of thoſe hours, which ſhould be appropriated to *ſleep*? —If in the pleaſures of the *colonial dance*, what

what muſt it be in *their own country*, where they may dance for ever: where there is no ſtated hour to interrupt their felicity, no intolerable labour immediately to ſucceed their recreations, and no overſeer to receive them under the diſcipline of the laſh?—If theſe therefore are the only circumſtances, by which the aſſertion can be proved, we may venture to ſay, without fear of oppoſition, that it can never be proved at all.

But theſe are not the only circumſtances. It is ſaid that they are barbarous at home.—But do you *receivers* civilize them?—Your unwillingneſs to convert them to Chriſtianity, becauſe you ſuppoſe you muſt uſe them more kindly when converted, is but a bad argument in favour of the fact.

It is affirmed again, that their manner of life, and their ſituation is ſuch in their own country, that to ſay they are happy is a jeſt. "* But who are you, who pretend to judge "of another man's happineſs? That ſtate

* Biſhop of Gloceſter's ſermon, preached before the ſociety for the propagation of the goſpel, at the anniverſary meeting, on the 21ſt of February, 1766.

"which

" which, each man, under the guidance of his " maker, forms for himſelf, and not one man " for another? To know what conſtitutes " mine or your happineſs, is the ſole preroga- " tive of him who created us, and caſt us in " ſo various and different moulds. Did your " ſlaves ever complain to you of their unhap- " pineſs, amidſt their native woods and de- " ſarts? Or, rather, let me aſk, did they ever " ceaſe complaining of their condition under " you their lordly maſters? Where they ſee, " indeed, the accommodations of civil life, " but ſee them all paſs to others, themſelves " unbenefited by them. Be ſo gracious then, " ye petty tyrants over human freedom, to " let your ſlaves judge for themſelves, what " it is which makes their own happineſs, and " then ſee whether they do not place it *in* " *the return to their own country*, rather than " in the contemplation of your grandeur, of " which their miſery makes ſo large a part."

But ſince you ſpeak with ſo much confi- dence on the ſubject, let us aſk you *receivers* again, if you have ever been informed by your unfor-

unfortunate ſlaves, that they had no connexions in the country from which they have forcibly been torn away: or, if you will take upon you to aſſert, that they never ſigh when they are alone, that they never relate to each other their tales of miſery and woe. But you judge of them, perhaps, in an happy moment, when you are dealing out to them their proviſions for the week; and are but little aware, that, though the countenance may be cheered with a momentary ſmile, the heart may be exquiſitely tortured. Were you to ſhew us, indeed, that there are laws, ſubject to no evaſion, by which you are obliged to clothe and feed them in a comfortable manner; were you to ſhew us that they are * protected at all; or that even *one* in a *thouſand* of thoſe maſters have †

* There is a law (but let the reader remark, that it prevails but in *one* of the colonies) againſt mutilation. It took its riſe from the frequency of the inhuman practice. But though a maſter cannot there chop off the limb of a ſlave with an axe, he may yet work, ſtarve, and beat him to death with impunity.

† *Two* inſtances are recorded by the *receivers*, out of about *fifty thouſand*, where a white man has ſuffered death for the murder of a negroe; but the receivers do not tell us, that theſe ſuffered more becauſe they were the peſts of ſociety, than becauſe the *murder of ſlaves was a crime.*

ſuffered

ſuffered death, who have been guilty of *premeditated* murder to their ſlaves, you would have a better claim to our belief: but you can neither produce the inſtances nor the laws. The people, of whom you ſpeak, are *ſlaves*, are your own *property*, are wholly at *your own diſpoſal*; and this idea is ſufficient to overturn your aſſertions of their happineſs.

But we ſhall now mention a circumſtance, which, in the preſent caſe, will have more weight than all the arguments which have hitherto been advanced. It is an opinion, which the *Africans* univerſally entertain, that, as ſoon as death ſhall releaſe them from the hands of their oppreſſors, they ſhall immediately be wafted back to their native plains, there to exiſt again, to enjoy the ſight of their beloved countrymen, and to ſpend the whole of their new exiſtence in ſcenes of tranquillity and delight: and ſo powerfully does this notion operate upon them, as to drive them frequently to the horrid extremity of putting a period to their lives. Now if theſe ſuicides are frequent, (which no perſon can deny) what are they but a proof that the ſituation of thoſe who

deſtroy

deſtroy themſelves muſt have been inſupportably wretched: and if the thought of returning to their country after death, *when they have experienced the colonial joys*, conſtitutes their ſupreme felicity, what are they but a proof, that they think there is as much difference between the two ſituations, as there is between miſery and delight?

Nor is the aſſertion of the *receivers* leſs liable to a refutation in the inſtance of thoſe, who terminate their own exiſtence, than of thoſe whom nature releaſes from their perſecutions. They die with a ſmile upon their face, and their funerals are attended by a vaſt concourſe of their countrymen, with every poſſible * demonſtration of joy. But why this unuſual mirth, if their departed brother has left any happy place? Or if he has been taken from the care of an indulgent maſter, who conſulted his pleaſures, and adminiſtered to his wants? But alas, it ariſes from hence, that *he is gone to his happy*

* A negroe-funeral is conſidered as a curious ſight, and is attended with ſinging, dancing, muſic, and every circumſtance that can ſhew the attendants to be happy on the occaſion.

country:

country: a circumſtance ſufficient of itſelf, to ſilence a myriad of thoſe ſpecious arguments, which the imagination has been racked, and will always be racked to produce, in favour of a ſyſtem of tyranny and oppreſſion.

It remains only, that we ſhould now conclude the chapter with a fact, which will ſhew that the account, which we have given of the ſituation of ſlaves, is ſtrictly true, and will refute at the ſame time all the arguments which have hitherto been, and may yet be brought by the *receivers*, to prove that their treatment is humane. In one of the weſtern colonies of the Europeans, * ſix hundred and fifty thouſand ſlaves were imported within an hundred years; at the expiration of which time, their whole poſterity were found to amount to one hundred and forty thouſand. This fact will aſcertain the

* In 96 years, ending in 1774, 800,000 ſlaves had been imported into the French part of St. Domingo, of which there remained only 290,000 in 1774. Of this laſt number only 140,000 were creoles, or natives of the iſland, i. e. of 650,000 ſlaves the whole poſterity were 140,000. *Conſiderations ſur la Colonie de St. Domingue,* publiſhed by authority in 1777.

treatment

treatment of itſelf. For how ſhamefully muſt theſe unfortunate people have been oppreſſed? What a dreadful havock muſt famine, fatigue, and cruelty, have made among them, when we conſider, that the deſcendants of *ſix hundred and fifty thouſand* people in the prime of life, gradually imported within a century, are leſs numerous than thoſe, which only * *ten thouſand* would have produced in the ſame period, under common advantages, and in a country congenial to their conſtitutions?

But the *receivers* have probably great merit on the occaſion. Let us therefore ſet it down to their humanity. Let us ſuppoſe for once, that this incredible waſte of the human ſpecies proceeds from a benevolent deſign; that, ſenſible of the miſeries of a ſervile ſtate,

* Ten thouſand people under fair advantages, and in a ſoil congenial to their conſtitutions, and where the means of ſubſiſtence are eaſy, ſhould produce in a century 160,000. This is the proportion in which the Americans increaſed; and the Africans in their own country increaſe in the ſame, if not in a greater proportion. Now as the climate of the colonies is as favourable to their health as that of their own country, the cauſes of the prodigious decreaſe in the one, and increaſe in the other, will be more conſpicuous.

they

they reſolve to wear out, as faſt as they poſſibly can, their unfortunate ſlaves, that their miſeries may the ſooner end, and, that a wretched poſterity may be prevented from ſharing their parental condition. Now, whether this is the plan of reaſoning which the *receivers* adopt, we cannot take upon us to decide; but true it is, that the effect produced is exactly the ſame, as if they had reaſoned wholly on this *benevolent* principle.

CHAP. X.

WE have now taken a ſurvey of the treatment which the unfortunate *Africans* undergo, when they are put into the hands of the *receivers*. This treatment, by the four firſt chapters of the preſent part of this Eſſay, appears to be wholly inſupportable, and to be ſuch as no human being can apply to another, without the imputation of ſuch crimes as ſhould make him tremble. But as many arguments are uſually advanced by thoſe who have any intereſt in the practice, by which they would either exculpate

exculpate the treatment, or diminſh its ſeverity, we allotted the remaining chapters for their diſcuſſion. In theſe we conſidered the probability of ſuch a treatment againſt the motives of intereſt; the credit that was to be given to thoſe diſintereſted writers on the ſubject, who have recorded particular inſtances of barbarity; the inferiority of the *Africans* to the human ſpecies; the compariſons that are generally made with reſpect to their ſituation; the poſitive ſcenes of felicity which they are ſaid to enjoy, and every other argument, in ſhort, that we have found to have ever been advanced in the defence of ſlavery. Theſe have been all conſidered, and we may venture to pronounce, that, inſtead of anſwering the purpoſe for which they were intended, they only ſerve to bring ſuch circumſtances to light, as clearly ſhew, that if ingenuity were racked to invent a ſituation, that would be the moſt diſtreſſing and inſupportable to the human race; it could never invent one that would ſuit the deſcription better than the——*colonial ſlavery*.

If

If this then be the caſe, and if ſlaves, notwithſtanding all the arguments to the contrary, are exquiſitely miſerable, we aſk you *receivers*, *by what right* you reduce them to ſo wretched a ſituation?

You reply, that you *buy them*; that your *money* conſtitutes your *right*, and that, like all other things which you purchaſe, they are wholly at your own diſpoſal.

Upon this principle alone it was, that we profeſſed to view your treatment, or examine your right, when we ſaid, that "* the queſ-"tion reſolved itſelf into two ſeperate parts "for diſcuſſion; into the *African* commerce, "as explained in the hiſtory of ſlavery, and "the ſubſequent ſlavery in the colonies, *as* "*founded on the equity of the commerce.*" Now, ſince it appears that this commerce, upon the fulleſt inveſtigation, is contrary to "† *the* "*principles of law and government, the dictates* "*of reaſon, the common maxims of equity, the* "*laws of nature, the admonitions of conſcience,* "*and, in ſhort, the whole doctrine of natural*

* Page 56. † Page 115.

"*religion,*"

"*religion*," it is evident that the *right*, which is founded upon it, muſt be the ſame; and that if thoſe things only are lawful in the ſight of God, which are either virtuous in themſelves, or proceed from virtuous principles, you *have no right over them at all.*

You yourſelves alſo confeſs this. For when we aſk you, whether any human being has a right to ſell you, you immediately anſwer, No; as if nature revolted at the thought, and as if it was ſo contradictory to your own feelings, as not to require conſideration. But who are you, that have this excluſive charter of trading in the liberties of mankind? When did nature, or rather the Author of nature, make ſo partial a diſtinction between you and them? When did He ſay, that you ſhould have the privilege of ſelling others, and that others ſhould not have the privilege of ſelling you?

Now ſince you confeſs, that no perſon whatever has a right to diſpoſe of you in this manner, you muſt confeſs alſo, that thoſe things are unlawful to be done to you, which are uſually done in conſequence of the

the ſale. Let us ſuppoſe then, that in conſequence of the *commerce* you were forced into a ſhip; that you were conveyed to another country; that you were ſold there; that you were confined to inceſſant labour; that you were pinched by continual hunger and thirſt; and ſubject to be whipped, cut and mangled at diſcretion; and all this at the hands of thoſe whom you had never offended; would you not think that you had a right to reſiſt their treatment? Would you not reſiſt it with a ſafe conſcience? And would you not be ſurprized if your reſiſtance ſhould be termed rebellion?—By the former premiſes you muſt anſwer, yes.——Such then is the caſe with the wretched *Africans*. They have a right to reſiſt your proceedings. They can reſiſt them, and yet they cannot juſtly be conſidered as rebellious. For though we ſuppoſe them to have been guilty of crimes to one another; though we ſuppoſe them to have been the moſt abandoned and execrable of men, yet are they perfectly innocent with reſpect to you *receivers*.—You have no right to touch even the hair of their heads without their own conſent. It is

not your money that can inveſt you with a right. Human liberty can neither be bought nor ſold. Every laſh that you give them is unjuſt. It is a laſh againſt nature and religion, and will ſurely ſtand recorded againſt you, ſince they are all, with reſpect to your *impious* ſelves, in a ſtate of nature; in a ſtate of original diſſociation; perfectly free.

CHAP. XI.

HAVING now conſidered both the *commerce* and *ſlavery*, it remains only to collect ſuch arguments as are ſcattered in different parts of the work, and to make ſuch additional remarks as preſent themſelves on the ſubject.

And firſt, let us aſk you, who have ſtudied the law of nature, and you, who are learned in the law of the land, if all property muſt not be inferior in its nature to its poſſeſſor, or, in other words, (for it is a caſe which every perſon muſt bring home to his own breaſt) if you ſuppoſe that any human being can have *a*

pro-

property in yourſelves? Let us aſk you appraiſers, who ſcientifically know the value of things, if any human creature is equivalent only to any of the trinkets that you wear, or at moſt, to any of the horſes that you ride: or, in other words, if you have ever conſidered the moſt coſtly things that you have valued, as *equivalent to yourſelves?* Let us aſk you rationaliſts, if man, as a reaſonable being, is not *accountable* for his actions, and let us put the ſame queſtion to you, who have ſtudied the divine writings? Let us aſk you parents, if ever you thought that you poſſeſſed an *authority* as ſuch, or if ever you expected a *duty* from your ſons; and let us aſk you ſons, if ever you felt an impulſe in your own breaſts to *obey* your parents. Now, if you ſhould all anſwer as we could wiſh, if you ſhould all anſwer conſiſtently with reaſon, nature, and the revealed voice of God, what a dreadful argument will preſent itſelf againſt the commerce and ſlavery of the human ſpecies, when we reflect that no man whatever can be bought or reduced to the ſituation of a ſlave, *but he muſt inſtantly become a brute, he*

muſt inſtantly be reduced to the value of thoſe things, which were made for his own uſe and convenience; he muſt inſtantly ceaſe to be accountable for his actions, and his authority as a parent, and his duty as a ſon muſt be inſtantly no more.

Neither does it eſcape our notice, when we are ſpeaking of the fatal wound which every ſocial duty muſt receive, how conſiderably Chriſtianity ſuffers by the conduct of you *receivers*. For by proſecuting this impious commerce, you keep the *Africans* in a ſtate of perpetual ferocity and barbariſm; and by proſecuting it in ſuch a manner, as muſt repreſent your religion as a ſyſtem of robbery and oppreſſion, you not only oppoſe the propagation of the goſpel, as far as you are able yourſelves, but throw the moſt certain impediments in the way of others, who might attempt the glorious and important taſk.

Such alſo is the effect which the ſubſequent ſlavery in the colonies muſt produce. For by your inhuman treatment of the unfortunate *Africans* there, you create the ſame inſuperable impediments to a converſion. For how

how muſt they deteſt the very name of *Chriſtians*, when you *Chriſtians* are deformed by ſo many and dreadful vices? How muſt they deteſt that ſyſtem of religion, which appears to reſiſt the natural rights of men, and to give a ſanction to brutality and murder?

But as we are now mentioning Chriſtianity, we muſt pauſe for a little time, to make a few remarks on the arguments which are uſually deduced from thence by the *receivers*, in defence of their ſyſtem of oppreſſion. For the reader may readily ſuppoſe that, if they did not heſitate to bring the *Old* Teſtament in ſupport of their barbarities, they would hardly let the *New* eſcape them.

St. Paul, having converted *Oneſimus* to the Chriſtian faith, who was a fugitive ſlave of *Philemon*, ſent him back to his maſter. This circumſtance has furniſhed the *receivers* with a plea, that Chriſtianity encourages ſlavery. But they have not only ſtrained the paſſages which they produce in ſupport of their aſſertions, but are ignorant of hiſtorical facts. The benevolent apoſtle, in the letter which he wrote to *Philemon*, the maſter of *Oneſimus*, addreſſes

addreſſes him to the following effect: "I ſend "him back to you, but not in his former ca- "pacity, * *not now as a ſervant, but above a* "*ſervant, a brother beloved.* In this manner "I beſeech you to receive him, for though I "could *enjoin* you to do it, yet I had rather "it ſhould be a matter of your *own will*, than "of *neceſſity*."

It appears that the ſame *Oneſimus*, when he was ſent back, was no longer *a ſlave*, that he was a miniſter of the goſpel, that he was joined with *Tychicus* in an eccleſiaſtical commiſſion to the church of the *Coloſſians*, and was afterwards biſhop of *Epheſus*. If language therefore has any meaning, and if hiſtory has recorded a fact which may be believed, there is no caſe more oppoſite to the doctrine of the *receivers*, than this which they produce in its ſupport.

It is ſaid again, that Chriſtianity, among the many important precepts which it contains, does not furniſh us with one for the abolition of ſlavery. But the reaſon is obvious. Slavery at the time of the introduc-

* Epiſt. to Philemon.

tion

tion of the goſpel was univerſally prevalent, and if Chriſtianity had abruptly declared, that the millions of ſlaves ſhould have been made free, who were then in the world, it would have been univerſally rejected, as containing doctrines that were dangerous, if not deſtructive, to ſociety. In order therefore that it might be univerſally received, it never meddled, by any poſitive precept, with the civil inſtitutions of the times: but though it does not expreſly ſay, that "you ſhall neither buy, "nor ſell, nor poſſeſs a ſlave," it is evident that, in its general tenor, it ſufficiently militates againſt the cuſtom.

The firſt doctrine which it inculcates, is that of *brotherly love*. It commands good-will towards men. It enjoins us to love our neighbours as ourſelves, and to do unto all men, as we would that they ſhould do unto us. And how can any man fulfil this ſcheme of univerſal benevolence, who reduces an unfortunate perſon *againſt his will*, to the *moſt inſupportable* of all human conditions; who conſiders him as his *private property*, and treats him, not as a brother, nor as one of the ſame parentage

rentage with himſelf, but as an *animal of the brute creation?*

But the moſt important doctrine is that by which we are aſſured that mankind are to exiſt in a future ſtate, and to give an account of thoſe actions which they have ſeverally done in the fleſh. This ſtrikes at the very root of ſlavery. For how can any man be juſtly called to an account for his actions, whoſe actions are not *at his own diſpoſal?* This is the caſe with the * *proper* ſlave. His liberty is abſolutely bought and *appropriated*; and if the purchaſe is *juſt and equitable*, he is *under the neceſſity* of perpetrating any crime, which the purchaſer may order him to commit; or, in other words, of ceaſing to be *accountable for his actions.*

Theſe doctrines therefore are ſufficient to ſhew, that ſlavery is incompatible with the

* The *African* ſlave is of this deſcription; and we could wiſh, in all our arguments on the preſent ſubject, to be underſtood as having ſpoken only of *proper ſlaves*. The ſlave who is condemnto the oar, to the fortifications, and other public works, is in a different predicament. His liberty is not *appropriated*, and therefore none of thoſe conſequences can be juſtly drawn, which have been deduced in the preſent caſe.

Chriſtian

Chriſtian ſyſtem. The *Europeans* conſidered them as ſuch, when, at the cloſe of the twelfth century, they reſiſted their hereditary prejudices, and occaſioned its abolition. Hence one, among many other proofs, that Chriſtianity was the production of infinite wiſdom; that though it did not take ſuch expreſs cognizance of the wicked national inſtitutions of the times, as ſhould hinder its reception, it ſhould yet contain ſuch doctrines, as when it ſhould be fully eſtabliſhed, would be ſufficient for the abolition of them all.

Thus then is the argument of you *receivers* ineffectual, and your conduct impious. For, by the proſecution of this wicked ſlavery and commerce, you not only oppoſe the propagation of that goſpel which was ordered to be preached unto every creature, and bring it into contempt, but you oppoſe its tenets alſo: firſt, becauſe you violate that law of *univerſal benevolence*, which was to take away thoſe hateful diſtinctions of *Jew* and *Gentile*, *Greek* and *Barbarian*, *bond* and *free*, which prevailed when the goſpel was introduced; and ſecondly, becauſe, as every man

is

is to give an acconnt of his actions hereafter, it is neceſſary that he ſhould be *free*.

Another argument yet remains, which, though nature will abſolutely turn pale at the recital, cannot poſſibly be omitted. In thoſe wars, which are made for the ſake of procuring ſlaves, it is evident that the conteſt muſt be generally obſtinate, and that great numbers muſt be ſlain on both ſides, before the event can be determined.——This we may reaſonably apprehend to be the caſe: and we have * ſhewn, that there have not been wanting inſtances, where the conquerors have been ſo incenſed at the reſiſtance they have found, that their ſpirit of vengeance has entirely got the better of their avarice, and they have murdered, in cool blood, every individual, without diſcrimination, either of age or ſex. From theſe and other circumſtances, we thought we had ſufficient reaſon to conclude, that, where *ten* were ſuppoſed to be taken, an *hundred*, including the victors and vanquiſhed,

* See the deſcription of an African battle, p. 98.

might

might be ſuppoſed to periſh. Now, as the annual exportation from *Africa* conſiſts of an hundred thouſand men, and as the two orders, of thoſe who are privately kidnapped by individuals, and of thoſe who are publickly ſeized by virtue of the authority of their prince, compoſe together, at leaſt, nine-tenths of the *African* ſlaves, it follows, that about ten thouſand conſiſt of convicts and priſoners of war. The laſt order is the moſt numerous. Let us ſuppoſe then that only ſix thouſand of this order are annually ſent into ſervitude, and it will immediately appear that no leſs than *ſixty thouſand* people annually periſh in thoſe wars, which are made only for the purpoſe of procuring ſlaves. But that this number, which we believe to be by no means exaggerated, may be free from all objection, we will include thoſe in the eſtimate, who die as they are travelling to the ſhips. Many of theſe unfortunate people have a journey of one thouſand miles to perform on foot, and are driven like ſheep through inhoſpitable woods and deſerts, where they frequently die in great numbers, from fatigue and want.

Now

Now if to thoſe, who thus periſh on the *African* continent, by war and travelling, we ſubjoin * thoſe who afterwards periſh on the voyage, and in the ſeaſoning together, it will appear that, in every yearly atttempt to ſupply the colonies, an *hundred thouſand* muſt periſh, even before *one* uſeful individual can be obtained.

Gracious God! how wicked, how beyond all example impious, muſt be that ſervitude, which cannot be carried on without the continual murder of ſo many and innocent perſons! What puniſhment is not to be expected for ſuch monſtrous and unparalleled barbarities! For if the blood of one man, unjuſtly ſhed, cries with ſo loud a voice for the divine vengeance, how ſhall the cries and groans of an *hundred thouſand* men, *annually murdered*, aſcend the celeſtial manſions, and bring down that puniſhment which ſuch enormities deſerve! But do we mention puniſhment? Do we allude to that puniſhment, which ſhall be inflicted on men as individuals, in a future life? Do we allude to that awful day,

* The loweſt computation is 40,000, ſee p. 140.

which

which ſhall ſurely come, when the maſter ſhall behold his murdered negroe face to face? when a train of mutilated ſlaves ſhall be brought againſt him? when he ſhall ſtand confounded and abaſhed? Or, do we allude to that puniſhment, which may be inflicted on them here, as members of a wicked community? For as a body politic, if its members are ever ſo numerous, may be conſidered as an whole, acting of itſelf, and by itſelf, in all affairs in which it is concerned, ſo it is accountable as ſuch, for its conduct; and as theſe kinds of polities have only their exiſtence here, ſo it is only in this world that, as ſuch, they can be puniſhed.

"Now, whether we conſider the crime, "with reſpect to the individuals immedi- "ately concerned in this moſt barbarous "and cruel traffic, or whether we conſider "it as * patronized and encouraged by the "laws of the land, it preſents to our view

* The legiſlature has ſquandered away more money in the proſecution of the ſlave trade, within twenty years, than in any other trade whatever, having granted from the year 1750, to the year 1770, the ſum of 300,000 pounds,

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"an equal degree of enormity. A crime,
"founded on a dreadful pre-eminence in
"wickedneſs—a crime which, being both of
"individuals and the nation, muſt ſome-
"time draw down upon us the heavieſt
"judgment of Almighty God, who made of
"one blood all the ſons of men, and who
"gave to all equally a natural right to liber-
"ty; and who, ruling all the kingdoms of the
"earth with equal providential juſtice, cannot
"ſuffer ſuch deliberate, ſuch monſtrous ini-
"quity, to paſs long unpuniſhed.†

But alas! he ſeems already to have interfered on this occaſion! The * violent and ſupernatural agitations of all the elements, which, for a ſeries of years, have prevailed in thoſe European ſettlements where the

† Sermon preached before the Univerſity of Cambridge, by the Rev. Peter Peckard.

* The firſt noted earthquake at Jamaica, happened June the 7th 1692, when Port Royal was totally ſunk. This was ſucceeded by one in the year 1697, and by another in the year 1722, from which time to the preſent, theſe regions of the globe ſeem to have been ſeverely viſited, but particularly during the laſt ſix or ſeven years. See a general account of the calamities, occaſioned by the late tremendous hurricanes and earthquakes in the Weſt-Indian iſlands, by Mr. Fowler.

unfortunate

unfortunate *Africans* are retained in a ſtate of ſlavery, and which have brought unſpeakable calamities on the inhabitants, and public loſſes on the ſtates to which they ſeverally belong, are ſo many awful viſitations of God for this in human violation of his laws. And it is not perhaps unworthy of remark, that as the ſubjects of Great-Britain have two thirds of this impious commerce in their own hands, ſo they have ſuffered in the ſame proportion, or * more ſeverely than the reſt.

How far theſe misfortunes may appear to be acts of providence, and to create an alarm to thoſe who have been accuſtomed to refer every effect to its apparent cauſe; who have been habituated to ſtop there, and to overlook the finger of God, becauſe it is ſlightly covered under the veil of ſecondary laws, we will not pretend to determine? but this we will aſſert with confidence, that the *Europeans* have richly deſerved them all; that the fear of ſympathy, which can hardly be reſtrained on other

* The many ſhips of war belonging to the Britiſh navy, which were loſt with all their crews in theſe dreadful hurricanes, will ſufficiently prove the fact.

melancholy

melancholy occaſions, ſeems to forget to flow at the relation of theſe; and that we can never, with any ſhadow of juſtice, wiſh proſperity to the undertakers of thoſe, whoſe ſucceſs muſt be at the expence of the happineſs of millions of their fellow-creatures.

But this is ſufficient. For if liberty is only an adventitious right; if men are by no means ſuperior to brutes; if every ſocial duty is a curſe; if cruelty is highly to be eſteemed; if murder is ſtrictly honourable, and Chriſtianity is a lye; then it is evident, that the *African* ſlavery may be purſued, without either the remorſe of conſcience, or the imputation of a crime. But if the contrary of this is true, which reaſon muſt immediately evince, it is evident that no cuſtom eſtabliſhed among men was ever more impious; ſince it is contrary to *reaſon, juſtice, nature, the principles of law and government, the whole doctrine, in ſhort, of natural religion, and the revealed voice of God.*

FINIS.

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